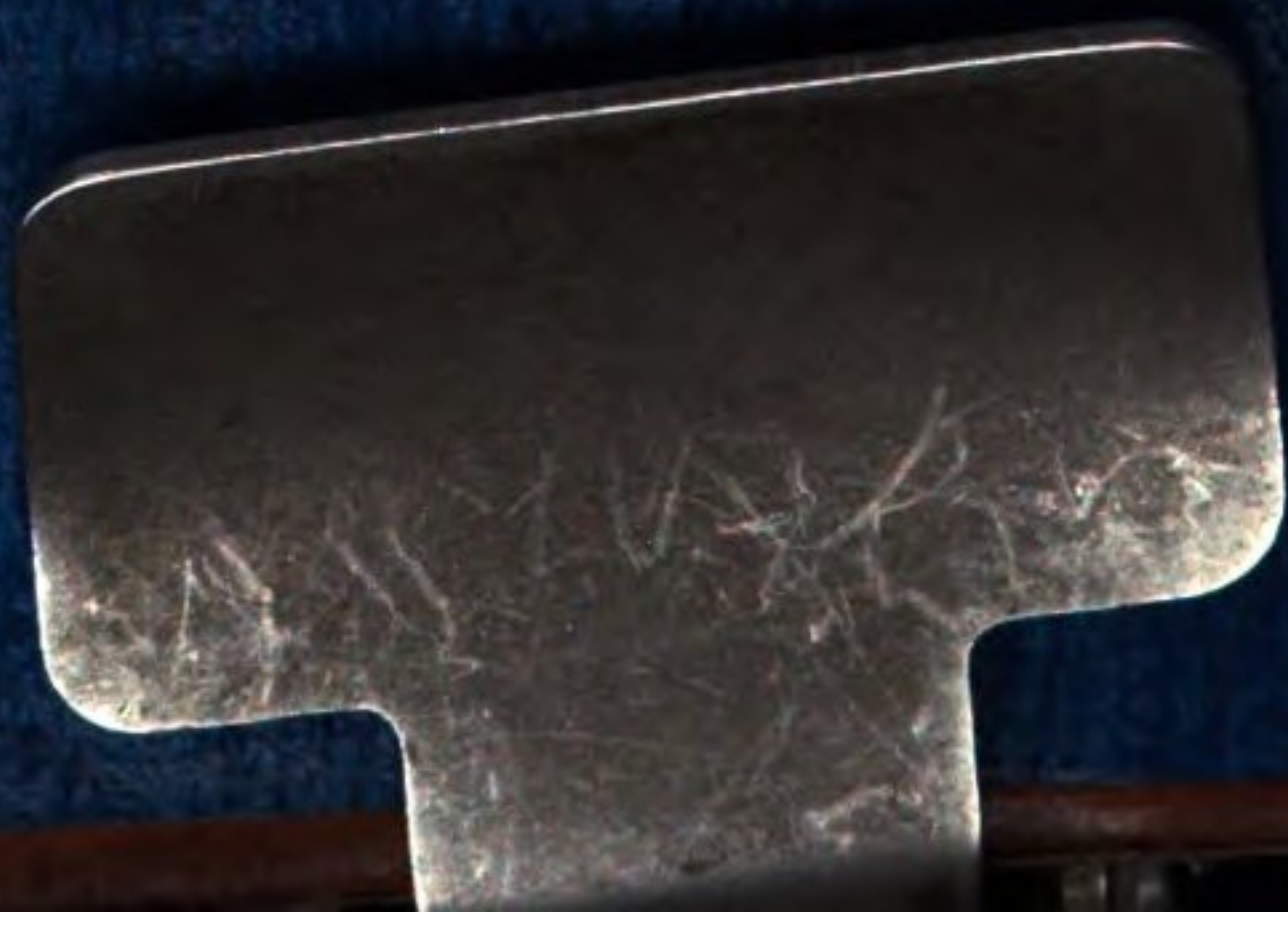






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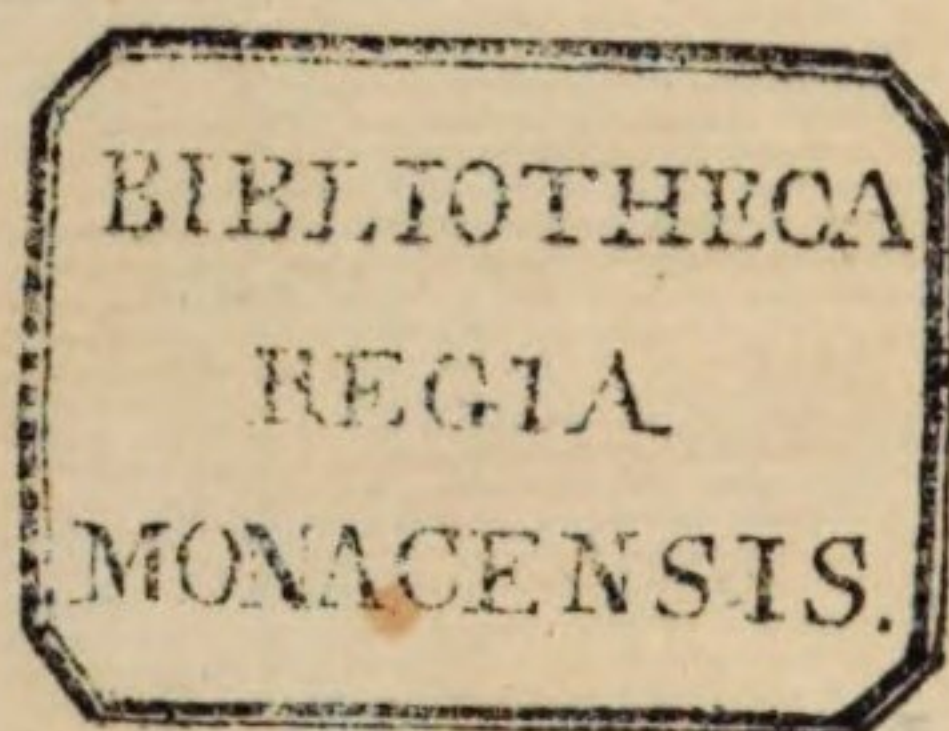
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O R I G I N A L
P O E M S,

BY

JOHN DRYDEN, Esq;

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

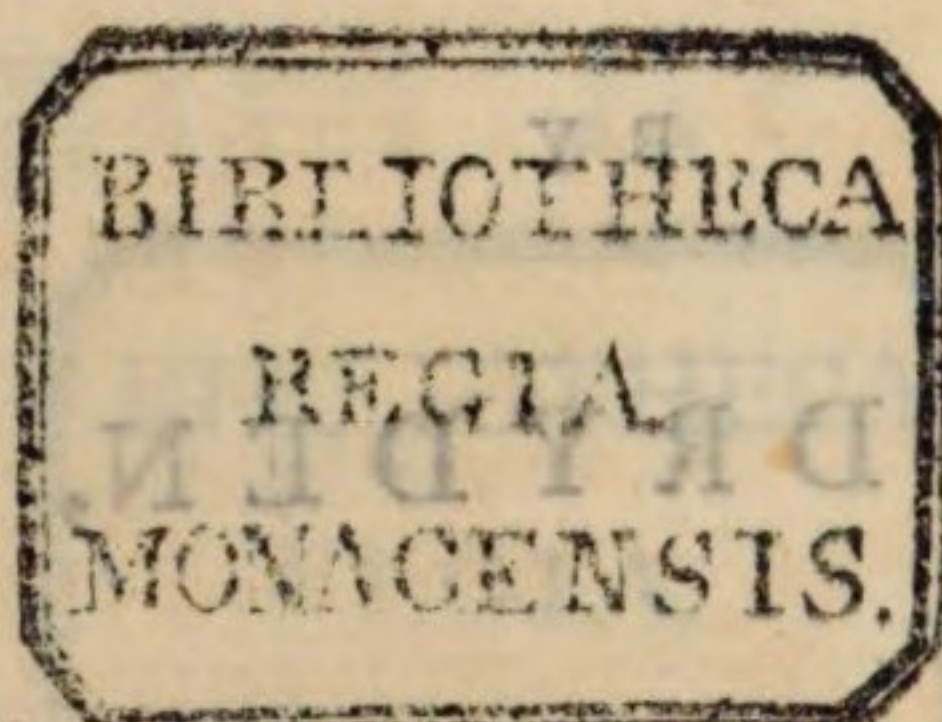
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P O E M S



IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

EDINBURGH:

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and J. BALFOUR.

MDCCLXXIII.

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VERSES in praise of Mr DRYDEN.

From Mr ADDISON's Account of the English Poets.

BUT see where artful Dryden next appears,
 Grown old in rhyme, but charming e'en in years.
 Great Dryden next! whose tuneful muse affords
 The sweetest numbers, and the fittest words.
 Whether in *comic* sounds, or *tragic* airs
 She forms her voice, she moves our smiles and tears.
 If *satire* or *heroic strains* she writes,
 Her *hero* pleases, and her *satire* bites.
 From her no harsh, unartful numbers fall,
 She wears all dresses, and she charms in all :
 How might we fear our English poetry,
 That long has flourish'd, should decay in thee ;
 Did not the Muses other hope appear,
 Harmonious Congreve, and forbid our fear !
 Congreve ! whose fancy's unexhausted store
 Have giv'n already much, and promis'd more :
 Congreve shall still preserve thy fame alive ;
 And Dryden's Muse shall in his friend survive.

ON ALEXANDER'S FEAST; or, The Power
of Music. An Ode.

From Mr POPE'S ESSAY on CRITICISM, line 376.

HEAR how Timotheus' vary'd lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!
While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love:
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow.
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the world's victor stood subdu'd by sound.
The pow'r of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was, is Dryden now.

P O E M S
U P O N
S E V E R A L O C C A S I O N S.

Heroic Stanzas on the Death of OLIVER
CROMWELL, written after his Funeral.

I.

AND now 'tis time; for their officious haste,
Who would before have born him to the sky,
Like eager Romans, ere all rites were past,
Did let too soon the sacred eagle fly.

II.

Tho' our best notes are treason to his fame,
Join'd with the loud applause of public voice;
Since Heaven, what praise we offer to his name,
Hath render'd too authentic by its choice.

III.

Tho' in his praise no arts can lib'ral be,
Since they, whose Muses have the highest flown,
Add not to his immortal memory,
But do an act of friendship to their own:

IV.

Yet 'tis our duty, and our interest too,
 Such monuments, as we can build, to raise;
 Lest all the world prevent what we should do,
 And claim a title in him by their praise.

V.

How shall I then begin, or where conclude,
 To draw a fame so truly circular?
 For, in a round, what order can be shew'd,
 Where all the parts so equal perfect are?

VI.

His grandeur he deriv'd from heav'n alone;
 For he was great ere fortune made him so:
 And wars, like mists that rise against the sun,
 Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.

VII.

No borrow'd bays his temples did adorn,
 But to our crown he did fresh jewels bring;
 Nor was his virtue poison'd, soon as born,
 With the too early thoughts of being king.

VIII.

Fortune (that easy mistress to the young,
 But to her ancient servants coy and hard)
 Him at that age her favourites rank'd among,
 When she her best-lov'd Pompey did discard.

IX.

He private mark'd the fault of others sway,
 And set as sea-marks for himself to shun:
 Not like rash monarchs, who their youth betray
 By acts their age too late would wish undone.

X.

And yet dominion was not his design:
 We owe that blessing, not to him, but heav'n,

Which to fair acts unsought rewards did join ;
Rewards, that less to him than us were given.

XI.

Our former chiefs, like sticklers of the war,
First fought t' inflame the parties, then to poise :
The quarrel lov'd, but did the cause abhor ;
And did not strike to hurt, but made a noise.

XII.

War, our consumption, was their gainful trade :
He inward bled, whilst they prolong'd our pain ;
He fought to hinder fighting, and assay'd
To staunch the blood by breathing of the vein.

XIII.

Swift and resistless through the land he past,
Like that bold Greek who did the East subdue,
And made to battles such heroic haste,
As if on wings of victory he flew.

XIV.

He fought secure of fortune as of fame :
Still by new maps the island might be shewn
Of conquests, which he strew'd where-e'er he came,
Thick as the Galaxy with stars is sown.

XV.

His palms, tho' under weights they did not stand,
Still thriv'd ; no winter could his laurels fade :
Heav'n in its portrait shew'd a workman's hand,
And drew it perfect, yet without a shade.

XVI.

Peace was the price of all its toil and care,
Which war had banish'd, and did now restore :
Bologna's walls thus mounted in the air,
To seat themselves more surely than before.

XVII.

Her safety rescu'd Ireland to him owes;
 And treach'rous Scotland, to no int'rest true,
 Yet blest'd that fate, which did his arms dispose
 Her land to civilize, as to subdue.

XVIII.

Nor was he like those stars, which only shine,
 When to pale mariners they storms portend:
 He had his calmer influence, and his mein
 Did love and majesty together blend.

XIX.

'Tis true, his count'nance did imprint an awe;
 And naturally all souls to his did bow,
 As wands of divination downward draw,
 And point to beds where sov'reign gold doth grow.

XX.

When past all off'rings to Feretrian Jove,
 He Mars depos'd, and arms to gowns made yield;
 Successful councils did him soon approve
 As fit for close intrigues, as open field.

XXI.

To suppliant Holland he vouchsaf'd a peace,
 Our once bold rival of the British main,
 Now tamely glad her unjust claim to cease,
 And buy our friendship with her idol, gain.

XXII.

Fame of th' asserted sea through Europe blown,
 Made France and Spain ambitious of his love;
 Each knew that side must conquer he would own;
 And for him fiercely, as for empire, strove.

XXIII.

No sooner was the Frenchman's cause embrac'd,
 Than the late Monsieur the grave Don outweigh'd;

His fortune turn'd the scale where it was cast ;
 Tho' Indian mines were in the other laid.

XXIV.

When absent, yet we conquer'd in his right :
 For tho' that some mean artist's skill were shown
 In mingling colours, or in placing light ;
 Yet still the fair designment was his own.

XXV.

For from all tempers he could service draw ;
 The worth of each with its allay he knew,
 And, as the confident of nature, saw
 How she complexions did divide and brew.

XXVI.

Or he their single virtues did survey,
 By intuition in his own large breast,
 Where all the rich ideas of them lay,
 That were the rule and measure to the rest.

XXVII.

When such heroic virtue heav'n sets out,
 The stars, like commons, sullenly obey ;
 Because it drains them when it comes about,
 And therefore is a tax they seldom pay.

XXVIII.

From this high spring our foreign conquests flow,
 Which yet more glorious triumphs do portend ;
 Since their commencement to his arms they owe,
 If springs as high as fountains may ascend.

XXIX.

He made us free-men of the continent,
 Whom Nature did like captives treat before ;
 To nobler preys the English lion sent,
 And taught him first in Belgian walks to roar.

XXX.

That old unquestion'd pirate of the land,
 Proud Rome, with dread the fate of Dunkirk heard;
 And trembling wish'd behind more Alps to stand,
 Altho' an Alexander were her guard.

XXXI.

By his command, we boldly cross'd the line,
 And bravely fought where southern stars arise;
 We trac'd the far-fetch'd gold unto the mine,
 And that, which brib'd our fathers, made our prize.

XXXII.

Such was our Prince; yet own'd a soul above
 The highest acts it could produce to show:
 Thus poor mechanic arts in public move,
 Whilst the deep secrets beyond practice go.

XXXIII.

Nor dy'd he when his ebbing fame went less,
 But when fresh laurels courted him to live:
 He seem'd but to prevent some new success,
 As if above what triumphs earth can give.

XXXIV.

His latest victories still thickest came,
 As, near the center, motion doth increase;
 'Till he, press'd down by his own weighty name,
 Did, like the vestal, under spoils decease.

XXXV.

But first the ocean as a tribute sent
 'That giant prince of all her wat'ry herd;
 And th'isle, when her protecting genius went,
 Upon his obsequies loud sighs conferr'd.

XXXVI.

No civil broils have since his death arose,
 But faction now by habit does obey;

And wars have that respect for his repose,
As winds for Halcyons, when they breed at sea.

XXXVII.

His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest,
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go.

ASTRAEA REDUX. A POEM on the happy
Restoration and Return of his Sacred Ma-
jesty CHARLES the Second, 1660.

Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna. Virg.

NOW with a general peace the world was blest'd,
While ours, a world divided from the rest,
A dreadful quiet felt, and, worser far
Than arms, a sullen interval of war:
Thus, when black clouds draw down the lab'ring skies,
Ere yet abroad the winged thunder flies,
An horrid stilness first invades the ear,
And in that silence we the tempest fear.
Th' ambitious Swede, like restless billows tofs'd,
On this hand gaining what on that he lost,
Though in his life he blood and ruin breath'd,
To his now guideless kingdom peace bequeath'd:
And heav'n, that seem'd regardless of our fate,
For France and Spain did miracles create;
Such mortal quarrels to compose in peace,
As nature bred, and int'rest did increase.

We sigh'd to hear the fair Iberian bride,
Must grow a lily to the lily's side,
While our cross stars deny'd us Charles his bed,
Whom our first flames and virgin love did wed.
For his long absence church and state did groan;
Madness the pulpit, faction seiz'd the throne;
Experienc'd age in deep despair was lost,
'To see the rebel thrive, the loyal cross'd.
Youth, that with joys had unacquainted been,
Envy'd gray hairs that once good days had seen:
We thought our fires, not with their own content,
Had ere we came to age our portion spent.
Nor could our nobles hope their bold attempt,
Who ruin'd crowns, would coronets exempt:
For when, by their designing leaders taught,
To strike at pow'r, which for themselves they fought,
The vulgar gull'd into rebellion, arm'd,
Their blood to action by their prize was warm'd.
The sacred purple then, and scarlet gown,
Like sanguine dye, to elephants was shown.
Thus when the bold Typhoeus scal'd the sky,
And forc'd great Jove from his own heav'n to fly,
(What king, what crown from treason's reach is free,
If Jove and heav'n can violated be?)
The lesser gods, that shar'd his prosp'rous state,
All suffer'd in the exil'd thund'rer's fate.
The rabble now such freedom did enjoy,
As winds at sea, that use it to destroy:
Blind as the Cyclops, and as wild as he,
They own'd a lawless savage liberty,
Like that our painted ancestors so priz'd,
Ere empire's arts their breasts had civiliz'd.

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

How great were then our Charles his woes, who thus
 Was forc'd to suffer for himself and us!
 He, tofs'd by fate, and hurry'd up and down,
 Heir to his father's sorrows, with his crown,
 Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age,
 But found his life too true a pilgrimage.
 Unconquer'd yet in that forlorn estate,
 His manly courage overcame his fate.
 His wounds he took, like Romans, on his breast,
 Which by his virtue were with laurels dress'd.
 As souls reach heav'n while yet in bodies pent,
 So he did live above his banishment.
 That sun, which we beheld with cozen'd eyes
 Within the water, mov'd along the skies.
 How easy 'tis, when destiny proves kind,
 With full-spread sails to run before the wind!
 But those that 'gainst stiff gales laveering go,
 Must be at once resolv'd and skilful too.
 He would not, like soft Otho, hope prevent,
 But stay'd and suffer'd fortune to repent.
 These virtues Galba in a stranger sought;
 And Piso to adopted empire brought.
 How shall I then my doubtful thoughts express,
 That must his suff'rings both regret and bless!
 For when his early valour heav'n had cross'd,
 And all at Worc'ster but the honour lost,
 Forc'd into exile from his rightful throne,
 He made all countries, where he came, his own;
 And viewing monarchs secret arts of sway,
 A royal factor for their kingdoms lay.
 Thus banish'd David spent abroad his time,
 When to be God's anointed was his crime,

And when restor'd made his proud neighbours rue
Those choice remarks he from his travels drew.
Nor is he only by affliction shown
To conquer others realms, but rule his own :
Recov'ring hardly what he lost before,
His right endears it much, his purchase more.
Inur'd to suffer ere he came to reign,
No rash procedure will his actions stain :
To bus'ness ripen'd by digestive thought,
His future rule is into method brought :
As they, who first proportion understand,
With easy practice reach a master's hand.
Well might the ancient poets then confer
On Night the honour'd name of Counsellor,
Since, struck with rays of prosp'rous fortune blind,
We light alone in dark afflictions find.
In such adversities to scepters train'd,
The name of Great his famous grandfire gain'd :
Who yet a king alone in name and right,
With hunger, cold, and angry Jove did fight ;
Shock'd by a covenanting league's vast pow'rs,
As holy and as catholic as curs :
Till fortune's fruitless spite had made it known,
Her blows not shook but riveted his throne.

Some lazy ages, lost in sleep and ease,
No action leave to busy chronicles :
Such, whose supine felicity but makes
In story chasms, in epochas mistakes ;
O'er whom time gently shakes his wings of down,
Till with his silent sickle they are mown.
Such is not Charles, his too, too active age,
Which, govern'd by the wild distemper'd rage

Of some black star infecting all the skies,
Made him at his own cost, like Adam, wife.
Tremble, ye nations, who, secure before,
Laugh'd at those arms, that 'gainst ourselves we bore;
Rouz'd by the lash of his own stubborn tail,
Our lion now will foreign foes assail.
With Alga who the sacred altar strows?
To all the sea-gods Charles an off'ring owes:
A bull to thee, Portunus, shall be slain,
A lamb to you the Tempests of the main:
For those loud storms, that did against him roar,
Have cast his shipwreck'd vessel on the shore.
Yet as wise artists mix their colours so,
That by degrees they from each other go;
Black steals unheeded from the neighb'ring white,
Without offending the well-cozen'd sight:
So on us stole our blessed change, while we
Th' effect did feel, but scarce the manner see.
Frosts that constrain the ground, and birth deny
To flow'rs that in its womb expecting lie,
Do seldom their usurping pow'r withdraw,
But raging floods pursue their hasty thaw.
Our thaw was mild, the cold not chas'd away,
But lost in kindly heat of lengthen'd day.
Heav'n would no bargain for its blessings drive,
But, what we could not pay for, freely give.
The Prince of Peace would, like himself, confer
A gift unhop'd without the price of war:
Yet, as he knew his blessing's worth, took care,
That we should know it by repeated pray'r;
Which storm'd the skies, and ravish'd Charles from
As heav'n itself is took by violence. [thence,

Booth's forward valour only serv'd to show,
He durst that duty pay we all did owe:
'Th' attempt was fair; but heav'n's prefixed hour
Not come: So, like the watchful traveller,
'That by the moon's mistaken light did rise,
Lay down again, and clos'd his weary eyes.
'Twas Monk, whom Providence design'd to loose
Those real bonds false freedom did impose.
The blessed saints, that watch'd this turning scene,
Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean,
To see small clues draw vastest weights along,
Not in their bulk but in their order strong.
Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore
Smiles to that changed face that wept before.
With ease such fond chimaera's we pursue,
As fancy frames for fancy to subdue:
But when ourselves to action we betake,
It shuns the mint like gold that chymists make.
How hard was then his task, at once to be
What in the body natural we see?
Man's Architect distinctly did ordain
The charge of muscles, nerves, and of the brain;
Through viewless conduits spirits do dispense
The springs of motion from the seat of sense.
'Twas not the hasty product of a day,
But the well-ripen'd fruit of wise delay.
He, like a patient angler, ere he strook,
Would let them play a while upon the hook.
Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,
At first embracing what it straight doth crush.
Wise leaches will not vain receipts obtrude,
While growing pains pronounce the humours crude;

Deaf to complaints they wait upon the ill,
Till some safe crisis authorise their skill.
Nor could his acts too close a vizard wear,
To 'scape their eyes whom guilt had taught to fear,
And guard with caution that polluted nest,
Whence legion twice before was dispossest'd :
Once sacred house; which when they enter'd in,
They thought the place could sanctify a sin;
Like those that vainly hop'd kind heav'n would wink,
While to excess on martyrs tombs they drink.
And as devouter Turks first warn their souls,
To part, before they taste forbidden bowls :
So these, when their black crimes they went about,
First timely charmed their useless conscience out.
Religion's name against itself was made;
The shadow serv'd the substance to invade;
Like zealous missions, they did care pretend
Of souls in shew, but made the gold their end.
Th' incens'd pow'rs beheld with scorn from high
An heaven so far distant from the sky,
Which durst, with horses hoofs that beat the ground,
And martial brass, belay the thunder's sound.
'Twas hence at length just vengeance thought it fit
To speed their ruin by their impious wit.
Thus Sforza, curs'd with a too fertile brain,
Lost by his wiles the pow'r his wit did gain.
Henceforth their *fougue* * must spend at lesser rate,
Than in its flames to wrap a nation's fate.
Suffer'd to live, they are like Helots set,
A virtuous shame within us to beget.

* Their *fury*. A French word.

For by example most we sinn'd before,
And glafs-like clearness mix'd with frailty bore.
But since reform'd by what we did amifs,
We by our suff'rings learnt to prize our blifs.
Like early lovers, whose unpractis'd hearts
Were long the May-game of malicious arts,
When once they find their jealousies were vain,
With double heat renew their fires again.
'Twas this produc'd the joy that hurry'd o'er
Such swarms of English to the neighb'ring shore
To fetch that prize by which Batavia made
So rich amends for our impoverish'd trade.
Oh had you seen from Scheveline's barren shore,
(Crouded with troops, and barren now no more,)
Afflicted Holland to his farewell bring
True sorrow, Holland to regret a king!
While waiting him his royal fleet did ride,
And willing winds to their low'r'd sails deny'd.
'The waving streamers, flags, and standards out,
The merry seamens rude but chearful shout;
And last the cannons voice that shook the skies,
And as it fares in sudden ecstasies,
At once bereft us both of ears and eyes.
The Naseby, now no longer England's shame,
But better to be lost in Charles his name,
(Like some unequal bride in nobler sheets)
Receives her lord: The joyful London meets
The princely York, himself alone a freight;
The Swift-sure groans beneath great Glouc'ster's weight.
Secure as when the Halcyon breeds, with these,
He that was born to drown might cross the seas.

Heav'n could not own a Providence, and take
The wealth three nations ventur'd at a stake.
The same indulgence Charles his voyage blest'd,
Which in his right had miracles confess'd.
The winds, that never moderation knew,
Afraid to blow too much, too faintly blew;
Or out of breath with joy could not enlarge
Their straitned lungs, or conscious of their charge.
The British Amphytrite, smooth and clear,
In richer azure never did appear;
Proud her returning Prince to entertain
With the submitted fasces of the main.

AN D welcome now, Great Monarch, to your own;
Behold th' approaching cliffs of Albion:
It is no longer motion cheats your view,
As you meet it, the land approacheth you.
The land returns, and, in the white it wears,
The marks of penitence and sorrow bears.
But you, whose goodness your descent doth shew,
Your heav'nly parentage and earthly too;
By that same mildness, which your father's crown
Before did ravish, shall secure your own.
Not try'd to rules of policy, you find
Revenge less sweet than a forgiving mind.
Thus, when th' Almighty would to Moses give
A sight of all he could behold and live;
A voice before his entry did proclaim
Long-suffering, Goodness, Mercy, in his name.
Your pow'r to justice doth submit your cause,
Your goodness only is above the laws;

Whose rigid letter, while pronounc'd by you,
Is softer made. So winds that tempests brew,
When through Arabian groves they take their flight,
Made wanton with rich odours, lose their spite.
And as those lees, that trouble it, refine
The agitated soul of generous wine:
So tears of joy, for your returning spilt,
Work out, and expiate our former guilt.
Methinks I see those crouds on Dover's strand,
Who, in their haste to welcome you to land,
Chock'd up the beach with their still growing store,
And made a wilder torrent on the shore:
While, spurr'd with eager thoughts of past delight,
Those, who had seen you, court a second fight;
Preventing still your steps, and making haste
To meet you often wherefoe'er you past.
How shall I speak of that triumphant day,
When you renew'd th' expiring pomp of May!
(A month that owns an int'rest in your name:
You and the flow'rs are its peculiar claim.)
That star that at your birth shone out so bright,
It stain'd the duller sun's meridian light,
Did once again its potent fires renew,
Guiding our eyes to find and worship you.

And now time's whiter series is begun,
Which in soft centuries shall smoothly run:
Those clouds, that overcast your morn, shall fly,
Dispell'd to farthest corners of the sky.
Our nation with united int'rest blest,
Not now content to poise, shall sway the rest.
Abroad our empire shall no limits know,
But, like the sea in boundless circles flow.

Your much lov'd fleet shall, with a wide command,
 Besiege the petty monarchs of the land :
 And as old time his offspring swallow'd down,
 Our ocean in its depths all seas shall drown.
 Their wealthy trade from pirate's rapine free,
 Our merchants shall no more advent'ers be :
 Nor in the farthest east those dangers fear,
 Which humble Holland must dissemble here.
 Spain to your gift alone her Indies owes :
 For what the pow'rful takes not, he bestows :
 And France, that did an exile's presence fear,
 May justly apprehend you still too near.
 At home the hateful names of party cease,
 And factious souls are weary'd into peace.
 The discontented now are only they,
 Whose crimes before did you just cause betray :
 Of those your edicts some reclaim from sins,
 But most your life and blest'd example wins.
 Oh happy Prince, whom heav'n hath taught the way
 By paying vows to have more vows to pay !
 Oh happy age ! Oh times like those alone,
 By fate reserv'd for great Augustus' throne !
 When the joint growth of arms and arts foresheew
 The world a Monarch, and that Monarch You.

A P A N E G Y R I C on the Coronation of
King CHARLES II. 1660.

I N that wild deluge where the world was drown'd,
When life and sin one common tomb had found,
The first small prospect of a rising hill
With various notes of joy the ark did fill :
Yet when that flood in its own depths was drown'd,
It left behind it false and slipp'ry ground ;
And the more solemn pomp was still deferr'd,
Till new-born nature in fresh looks appear'd.
Thus, Royal Sir, to see you landed here,
Was cause enough of triumph for a year :
Nor would your care those glorious joys repeat,
Till they at once might be secure and great :
Till your kind beams, by their continued stay,
Had warm'd the ground, and call'd the damps away.
Such vapours, while your pow'rful influence dries,
Then soonest vanish when they highest rise.
Had greater haste these sacred rites prepar'd,
Some guilty months had in your triumphs shar'd :
But this untainted year is all your own ;
Your glories may without our crimes be shown.
We had not yet exhausted all our store,
When you refresh'd our joys by adding more :
As heav'n, of old, dispens'd coelestial dew,
You give us manna, and still give us new.
Now our sad ruins are remov'd from sight,
The season too comes fraught with new delight :

Time seems not now beneath his years to stoop,
Nor do his wings with sickly feathers droop :
Soft western winds waft o'er the gaudy spring,
And open'd scenes of flow'rs and blossoms bring,
To grace this happy day, while you appear,
Not king of us alone, but of the year.
All eyes you draw, and with the eyes the heart;
Of your own pomp yourself the greatest part :
Loud shouts the nation's happiness proclaim,
And heav'n this day is feasted with your name.
Your cavalcade the fair spectators view,
From their high standings, yet look up to you.
From your brave train each singles out a prey,
And longs to date a conquest from your day.
Now charg'd with blessings while you seek repose,
Officious slumbers haste your eyes to close;
And glori'ous dreams stand ready to restore
The pleasing shapes of all you saw before.
Next, to the sacred temple you are led,
Where waits a crown for your more sacred head
How justly from the church that crown is due,
Preserv'd from ruin, and restor'd by you !
The grateful choir their harmony employ,
Not to make greater, but more solemn joy.
Wrapt soft and warm your name is sent on high,
As flames do on the wings of incense fly :
Music herself is lost, in vain she brings
Her choicest notes to praise the best of kings :
Her melting strains in you a tomb have found,
And lie like bees in their own sweetness drown'd.
He that brought peace, and discord could atone ;
His name is music of itself alone.

Now while the sacred oil anoints your head,
And fragrant scents, begun from you, are spread
Through the large dome, the people's joyful sound,
Sent back, is still preserv'd in hallow'd ground :
Which in one blessing mix'd descends on you,
As heightned spirits fall in richer dew.
Not that our wishes do increase your store,
Full of yourself, you can admit no more :
We add not to your glory, but employ
Our time, like angels, in expressing joy.
Nor is it duty, or our hopes alone,
Create that joy, but full fruition :
We know those blessings, which we must possess,
And judge of future by past happiness.
No promise can oblige a prince so much
Still to be good, as long to have been such.
A noble emulation heats your breast,
And your own fame now robes you of your rest.
Good actions still must be maintain'd with good,
As bodies nourish'd with resembling food.
You have already quench'd sedition's brand ;
And zeal, which burnt it, only warms the land.
The jealous sects, that dare not trust their cause
So far from their own will as to the laws,
You for their umpire and their synod take,
And their appeal alone to Caesar make.
Kind heav'n so rare a temper did provide,
That guilt repenting might in it confide.
Among our crimes oblivion may be set ;
But 'tis our king's perfection to forget.
Virtues unknown to these rough northern climes
From milder heav'ns you bring, without their crimes.

Your calmness does not after-storms provide,
Nor seeming patience mortal anger hide.
When empire first from families did spring,
Then every father govern'd as a king.
But you, that are a sov'reign prince, allay
Imperial pow'r with your paternal sway.
From those great cares when ease your soul unbends,
Your pleasures are design'd to noble ends :
Born to command the mistress of the seas,
Your thoughts themselves in that blue empire please.
Hither in summer ev'nings you repair
To take the fraicheur of the purer air.
Undaunted here you ride when winter raves,
With Caesar's heart that rose above the waves.
More I could sing, but fear my numbers stays ;
No loyal subject dares that courage praise.
In stately frigates most delight you find,
Where well-drawn battles fire your martial mind.
What to your cares we owe, is learn'd from hence,
When even your pleasures serve for our defence.
Beyond your court flows in th' admitted tide,
Where in new depths the wond'ring fishes glide :
Here in a royal bed the waters sleep ;
When tir'd at sea, within this bay they creep.
Here the mistrustful fowl no harm suspects,
So safe are all things which our king protects.
From your lov'd Thames a blessing yet is due,
Second alone to that it brought in you ;
A queen, from whose chaste womb, ordain'd by fate,
The souls of kings unborn, for bodies wait.
It was your love before made discord cease :
Your love is destin'd to your country's peace.

Both Indies, rivals in your bed, provide
 With gold or jewels to adorn your bride.
 This to a mighty king presents rich ore,
 While that with incense does a god implore.
 Two kingdoms wait your doom, and, as you chuse,
 This must receive a crown, or that must lose.
 Thus from your royal oak, like Jove's of old,
 Are answers fought, and destinies fore told :
 Propitious oracles are begg'd with vows,
 And crowns that grow upon the sacred boughs.
 Your subjects, while you weigh the nation's fate,
 Suspend to both their doubtful love or hate:
 Chuse only, Sir, that so they may possess
 With their own peace their childrens happiness.

To the Lord CHANCELLOR HYDE, pre-
 sented on New-year's Day, 1662.

My LORD,

WHILE flatt'ring crouds officiously appear
 To give themselves, not you, an happy year;
 And by the greatness of their presents prove
 How much they hope, but not how well they love;
 The Muses (who your early courtship boast,
 Though now your flames are with their beauty lost)
 Yet watch their time, that, if you have forgot
 They were your mistresses, the world may not:
 Decay'd by time and wars, they only prove
 Their former beauty by your former love:
 And now present, as ancient ladies do,
 That courted long, at length are forc'd to wooe.

For still they look on you with such kind eyes,
As those that see the church's sovereign rise;
From their own order chose, in whose high state
They think themselves the second choice of fate.
When our great monarch into exile went,
Wit and religion suffer'd banishment.
Thus once, when Troy was wrap'd in fire and smoke,
The helpless gods their burning shrines forsook;
They with the vanquish'd prince and party go,
And leave their temples empty to the foe.
At length the muses stand, restor'd again
To that great charge which nature did ordain;
And their lov'd Druids seem reviv'd by fate,
While you dispense the laws, and guide the state.
The nation's soul, our monarch, does dispense,
Through you, to us his vital influence;
You are the channel, where those spirits flow,
And work them higher, as to us they go.

In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,
Until the earth seems join'd unto the sky:
So in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our king and you:
Our sight is limited where you are join'd,
And beyond that no farther heav'n can find.
So well your virtues do with his agree,
That, though your orbs of diff'rent greatness be,
Yet both are for each other's use dispos'd,
His to inclose, and yours to be inclos'd.
Nor could another in your room have been,
Except an emptiness had come between.
Well may he then to you his cares impart,
And share his burden where he shares his heart.

In you his sleep still wakes; his pleasures find
 Their share of bus'ness in your lab'ring mind.
 So when the weary Sun his place resigns,
 He leaves his light, and by reflection shines.

Justice, that sits and frowns where public laws
 Exclude soft mercy from a private cause,
 In your tribunal most herself does please;
 There only smiles because she lives at ease;
 And, like young David, finds her strength the more,
 When disencumber'd from those arms she wore.

Heav'n would your royal master should exceed
 Most in that virtue, which we most did need;
 And his mild father (who too late did find
 All mercy vain, but what with pow'r was join'd)
 His fatal goodness left to fitter times,
 Not to increase, but to absolve our crimes:

But when the heir of this vast treasure knew
 How large a legacy was left to you,
 (Too great for any subject to retain)
 He wisely ty'd it to the crown again:
 Yet, passing thro' your hands, it gathers more,
 As streams, thro' mines, bear tincture of their ore.

While emp'ric politicians use deceit,
 Hide what they give, and cure but by a cheat;
 You boldly shew that skill, which they pretend,
 And work by means as noble as your end:
 Which should you veil, we might unwind the clue,
 As men do nature, 'till we came to you.

And as the Indies were not found, before
 Those rich perfumes, which, from the happy shore,
 The winds upon their balmy wings convey'd,
 Whose guilty sweetness first their world betray'd;
 So by your counsels we are brought to view

A rich and undiscover'd world in you.
By you our monarch does that fame assure,
Which kings must have, or cannot live secure;
For prosp'rous princes gain their subjects heart,
Who love that praise in which themselves have part.
By you he fits those subjects to obey;
As heav'n's eternal Monarch does convey
His pow'r unseen, and man to his designs
By his bright ministers the stars inclines.

Our setting sun, from his declining seat,
Shot beams of kindness on you, not of heat:
And, when his love was bounded in a few,
That were unhappy that they might be true,
Made you the fav'rite of his last sad times,
That is, a suff'rer in his subjects crimes.
Thus those first favours, you receiv'd, were sent,
Like heav'n's rewards, in earthly punishment.
Yet fortune, conscious of your destiny,
E'en then took care to lay you softly by;
And wrap'd your fate among her precious things,
Kept fresh to be unfolded with your King's.
Shewn all at once you dazzled so our eyes,
As new-born Pallas did the gods surprise:
When, springing forth from Jove's new-closing wound,
She struck the warlike spear into the ground;
Which sprouting leaves did suddenly inclose,
And peaceful olives shaded as they rose.

How strangely active are the arts of peace,
Whose restless motions less than wars do cease!
Peace is not freed from labour, but from noise;
And war more force, but not more pains, employs:
Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,
That, like the earth's, it leaves our sense behind;

While you so smoothly turn and rowl our sphere,
That rapid motion does but rest appear.
For, as in nature's swiftnefs, with the throng
Of flying orbs while ours is born along,
All seems at rest to the deluded eye,
Mov'd by the soul of the same harmony :
So, carry'd on by your unwearied care,
We rest in peace, and yet in motion share.
Let envy then those crimes within you see,
From which the happy never must be free;
Envy, that does with misery reside,
The joy and the revenge of ruin'd pride.
Think it not hard, if at so cheap a rate
You can secure the constancy of fate,
Whose kindness sent what does their malice seem,
By lesser ills the greater to redeem.
Nor can we this weak show'r a tempest call,
But drops of heat, that in the sun-shine fall.
You have already weary'd fortune so,
She cannot further be your friend or foe ;
But sits all breathless, and admires to feel
A fate so weighty, that it stops her wheel.
In all things else above our humble fate,
Your equal mind yet swells not into state :
But, like some mountain in those happy isles,
Where in perpetual spring young nature smiles,
Your greatness shews ; no horror to affright,
But trees for shade, and flow'rs to court the sight.
Sometimes the hill submits itself a while
In small descents, which do its height beguile ;
And sometimes mounts, but so as billows play,
Whose rise not hinders, but makes short our way.

Your brow, which does no fear of thunder know,
Sees rowling tempests vainly beat below ;
And, like Olympus' top, th' impression wears
Of love and friendship writ in former years.
Yet, unimpair'd with labours, or with time,
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.
Thus heav'nly bodies do our time beget,
And measure change, but share no part of it.
And still it shall without a weight increase,
Like this new-year, whose motions never cease.
For since the glorious course you have begun
Is led by Charles, as that is by the sun,
It must both weightless and immortal prove,
Because the centre of it is above.

ANNUS MIRABILIS:

THE

YEAR OF WONDERS,

M, DC, LXVI.

A N

HISTORICAL POEM.

ANNUS MIRABILIS.

THE

YEAR OF WONDERS.

MDCCLXXI.

AND

HISTORICAL ROMAN.

A N
A C C O U N T

Of the Ensuing

P O E M,

In a Letter to the Honourable

S I R R O B E R T H O W A R D.

S I R,

I AM so many ways obliged to you, and so little able to return your favours, that, like those who owe too much, I can only live by getting farther into your debt. You have not only been careful of my fortune, which was the effect of your nobleness, but you have been sollicitous of my reputation, which is that of your kindness. It is not long since I gave you the trouble of perusing a play for me, and now, instead of an acknowledgment, I have given you a greater, in the correction of a Poem. But, since you are to bear this persecution, I will at least give you the encouragement of a martyr; you could never suffer in a nobler cause. For I have chosen the most heroic subject, which any Poet could desire: I have taken upon me to describe the motives, the beginning, progress, and successes, of a most just and necessary war; in it, the care, manage-

ment, and prudence of our king; the conduct and valour of a royal admiral, and of two incomparable generals; the invincible courage of our captains and seamen; and three glorious victories, the result of all. After this, I have, in the fire, the most deplorable, but withal the greatest argument that can be imagined; the destruction being so swift, so sudden, so vast and miserable, as nothing can parallel in story. The former part of this Poem, relating to the war, is but a due expiation for my not serving my king and country in it. All gentlemen are almost obliged to it; and I know no reason we should give that advantage to the commonalty of England, to be foremost in brave actions, which the nobles of France would never suffer in their peasants. I should not have written this, but to a person who has been ever forward to appear in all employments whither his honour and generosity have called him. The latter part of my Poem, which describes the fire, I owe, first to the piety and fatherly affection of our monarch to his suffering subjects, and, in the second place, to the courage, loyalty, and magnanimity of the city; both which were so conspicuous, that I have wanted words to celebrate them as they deserve. I have called my Poem HISTORICAL, not EPIC, though both the actions and actors are as much heroic, as any poem can contain. But, since the action is not properly one, nor that accomplished in the last successes, I have judged it too bold a title for a few stanzas, which are little more in number than a single Iliad, or the longest of the Æneids. For this reason (I mean not of length, but broken action, tied too severely to the laws of history) I am apt to agree

with those, who rank Lucan rather among Historians in verse, than Epic poets : In whose room, if I am not deceived, Silius Italicus, though a worse writer, may more justly be admitted. I have chosen to write my poem in Quatrains, or stanzas of four in alternate rhyme, because I have ever judged them more noble, and of greater dignity, both for the sound and number, than any other verse in use amongst us ; in which I am sure I have your approbation. The learned languages have, certainly, a great advantage of us, in not being tied to the slavery of any rhyme, and were less constrained in the quantity of every syllable, which they might vary with Spondees or Dactyls ; besides so many other helps of grammatical figures, for the lengthening or abbreviation of them, than the modern are in the close of that one syllable, which often confines, and more often corrupts, the sense of all the rest. But in this necessity of our rhymes, I have always found the couplet verse most easy, though not so proper for this occasion : For there the work is sooner at an end, every two lines concluding the labour of the poet ; but in Quatrains he is to carry it farther on, and not only so, but to bear along in his head the troublesome sense of four lines together. For those, who write correctly in this kind, must needs acknowledge, that the last line of the stanza is to be considered in the composition of the first. Neither can we give ourselves the liberty of making any part of a verse for the sake of rhyme, or concluding with a word which is not current English, or using the variety of female rhymes, all which our fathers practised : And for the female rhymes, they are

still in use amongst other nations ; with the Italian in every line, with the Spaniard promiscuously, with the French alternately ; as those who have read the *Alarique*, the *Pucelle*, or any of their later poems, will agree with me. And besides this, they write in Alexandrins, or verses of six feet ; such as amongst us is the old translation of Homer by Chapman : All which, by lengthening of their chain, makes the sphere of their activity the larger. I have dwelt too long upon the choice of my stanza, which, you may remember, is much better defended in the preface to *Gondibert* ; and therefore I will hasten to acquaint you with my endeavours in the writing. In general, I will only say, I have never yet seen the description of any naval fight in the proper terms which are used at sea : And if there be any such, in another language, as that of Lucan in the third of his *Pharsalia*, yet I could not avail myself of it in the English ; the terms of art in every tongue bearing more of the idiom of it than any other words. We hear indeed, among our poets, of the thundering of guns, the smoke, the disorder, and the slaughter ; but all these are common notions. And, certainly, as those who, in a logical dispute, keep in general terms, would hide a fallacy ; so those, who do it in any poetical description, would veil the ignorance.

“ Descriptas fervare vices, operumque colores,

“ Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, Poeta salutor ?”

For my own part, if I had little knowledge of the sea, yet I have thought it no shame to learn : And if I have made some few mistakes, 'tis only, as you can bear me witness, because I have wanted opportunity to correct them ; the whole poem being first written, and now sent you from a place, where I have not so

much as the converse of any seamen. Yet, tho' the trouble I had in writing it was great, it was more than recompensed by the pleasure. I found myself so warm in celebrating the praise of military men, two such especially as the Prince and General, that it is no wonder if they inspired me with thoughts above my ordinary level. And I am well satisfied, that, as they are incomparably the best subject I ever had, excepting only the Royal Family; so also, that this I have written of them is much better than what I have performed on any other. I have been forced to help out other arguments; but this has been bountiful to me: They have been low and barren of praise, and I have exalted them, and made them fruitful; but here-----“*Omnia sponte sua reddit justissima tellus.*” I have had a large, a fair, and a pleasant field; so fertile, that, without my cultivating, it has given me two harvests in a Summer, and in both oppressed the reaper. All other greatness in subjects is only counterfeit: It will not endure the test of danger; the greatness of arms is only real: Other greatness burthens a nation with its weight; this supports it with its strength. And as it is the happiness of the age, so it is the peculiar goodness of the best of kings, that we may praise his subjects without offending him. Doubtless it proceeds from a just confidence of his own virtue, which the lustre of no other can be so great as to darken in him; for the good or the valiant are never safely praised under a bad or degenerate prince. But to return from this digression to a farther account of my poem. I must crave leave to tell you, that, as I have endeavoured to adorn it with noble thoughts, so much more to

express those thoughts with elocution. The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit; and wit in the poet, or wit writing (if you will give me leave to use a school distinction) is no other than the faculty of imagination in the writer, which like a nimble spaniel, beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it springs the quarry it hunted after; or, without metaphor, which searches over all the memory for the species or ideas of those things which it designs to represent. Wit written is that which is well defined, the happy result of thought, or product of imagination. But to proceed from wit, in the general notion of it, to the proper wit of an heroic or historical poem, I judge it chiefly to consist in the delightful imagining of persons, actions, passions, or things. 'Tis not the jerk nor sting of an epigram, nor the seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis, (the delight of an ill judging-audience in a play of rhyme), nor the gingle of a more poor paranomasia; neither is it so much the morality of a grave sentence, affected by Lucan, but more sparingly used by Virgil; but it is some lively and apt description, dressed in such colours of speech, that it sets before your eyes the absent object, as perfectly, and more delightfully than nature. So then the first happiness of the poet's imagination is properly invention or finding of the thought; the second is fancy, or the variation, deriving or moulding of that thought as the judgment represents it proper to the subject; the third is elocution, or the art of cloathing and adorning that thought, so found and varied, in apt, significant, and sounding words: The quickness of the imagination is seen in the invention, the fertility in the fan-

cy, and the accuracy in the expression. For the two first of these, Ovid is famous amongst the poets; for the latter, Virgil. Ovid images more often the movements and affections of the mind, either combating between two contrary passions, or extremely discomposed by one. His words therefore are the least part of his care; for he pictures nature in disorder, with which the study and choice of words is inconsistent. This is the proper wit of dialogue or discourse, and consequently of the drama, where all that is said is to be supposed the effect of sudden thought; which, though it excludes not the quickness of wit in repartees, yet admits not a too curious election of words, too frequent allusions, or use of tropes, or, in fine, any thing that shews remoteness of thought, or labour in the writer. On the other side, Virgil speaks not so often to us in the person of another, like Ovid, but in his own: He relates almost all things as from himself, and thereby gains more liberty, than the other, to express his thoughts with all the graces of elocution, to write more figuratively, and to confess as well the labour, as the force of his imagination. Though he describes his Dido well and naturally, in the violence of her passions, yet he must yield in that to the Myrrha, the Biblis, the Althaea, of Ovid; for, as great an admirer of him as I am, I must acknowledge, that, if I see not more of their souls than I see of Dido's, at least I have a greater concernment for them: And that convinces me, that Ovid has touched those tender strokes more delicately than Virgil could. But when action or persons are to be described, when any such image is to be set before us, how bold, how masterly are the

strokes of Virgil! we see the objects, he presents us with, in their native figures, in their proper motions; but so we see them, as our own eyes could never have beheld them so beautiful in themselves. We see the soul of the poet, like that universal one of which he speaks, informing and moving through all his pictures:

“ -----Totamque infusa per artus

“ Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.”

We behold him embellishing his images, as he makes Venus breathing beauty upon her son Aeneas.

“ -----lumenque juventae

“ Purpureum, et laetos oculis afflarat honores :

“ Quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo

“ Argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro.”

See his tempest, his funeral sports, his combat of Turnus and Æneas; and in his Georgics, which I esteem the divinest part of all his writings, the Plague, the Country, the Battle of Bulls, the Labour of the Bees, and those many other excellent images of nature, most of which are neither great in themselves, nor have any natural ornament to bear them up: But the words, wherewith he describes them are so excellent, that it might be well applied to him which was said by Ovid, “ Materiam superabat opus:” The very sound of his words has often somewhat that is connatural to the subject; and while we read him, we sit, as in a play, beholding the scenes of what he represents. To perform this, he made frequent use of tropes, which, you know, change the nature of a known word, by applying it to some other signification; and this is it which Horace means in his epistle to the Piso's:

“Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum

“Reddiderit junctura novum”-----

But I am sensible, I have presumed too far to entertain you with a rude discourse of that art, which you both know so well, and put into practice with so much happiness. Yet, before I leave Virgil, I must own the vanity to tell you, and by you the world, that he has been my master in this poem: I have followed him every where, I know not with what success, but I am sure with diligence enough: My images are many of them copied from him, and the rest are imitations of him. My expressions also are as near as the idioms of the two languages would admit of in translation. And this, Sir, I have done with that boldness, for which I will stand accountable to any of our little critics, who, perhaps, are no better acquainted with him than I am. Upon your first perusal of this poem, you have taken notice of some words, which I have innovated (if it be too bold for me to say, refined) upon his Latin; which, as I offer not to introduce into English prose, so I hope they are neither improper, nor altogether unelegant, in verse; and, in this, Horace will again defend me.

“Et nova, fictaque nuper, habebunt verba fidem, si

“Graeco fonte cadunt, parce detorta”-----

The inference is exceeding plain: For, if a Roman poet might have liberty to coin a word, supposing only that it was derived from the Greek, was put into a Latin termination, and that he used this liberty but seldom, and with modesty; how much more justly may I challenge that privilege to do it, with the same perquisites, from the best and most judicious

of Latin writers? In some places, where either the fancy, or the words, were his, or any other's, I have noted it in the margin, that I might not seem a plagiarist; in others I have neglected it, to avoid as well tediousness, as the affectation of doing it too often. Such descriptions or images, well wrought, which I promise not for mine, are, as I have said, the adequate delight of Heroic Poesy; for they beget admiration, which is its proper object; as the images of the burlesque, which is contrary to this, by the same reason, beget laughter: For the one shews nature beautified, as in the picture of a fair woman, which we all admire; the other shews her deformed, as in that of a lazar, or of a fool, with distorted face and antique gestures, at which we cannot forbear to laugh, because it is a deviation from nature. But though the same images serve equally for the Epic Poesy, and for the Historic and Panegyric, which are branches of it, yet a several sort of sculpture is to be used in them. If some of them are to be like those of Juvenal, "*Stantes in curribus Æmiliani*," heroes drawn in their triumphal chariots, and in their full proportion; others are to be, like that of Virgil, "*Spirantia mollius aera*:" There is somewhat more of softness and tenderness to be shewn in them. You will soon find I write not this without concern. Some, who have seen a paper of verses which I wrote last year to her Highness the Dutchess, have accused them of that only thing I could defend in them. They said, I did "*humi serpere*," that I wanted not only height of fancy, but dignity of words, to set it off. I might well answer with that of Horace, "*Nunc non erat his locus*;" I knew, I addressed

them to a lady, and accordingly I affected the softness of expression, and the smoothness of measure, rather than the height of thought; and in what I did endeavour, it is no vanity to say I have succeeded. I detest arrogance; but there is some difference betwixt that and a just defence. But I will not farther bribe your candour, or the reader's. I leave them to speak for me; and, if they can, to make out that character, not pretending to a greater, which I have given them.

To her Royal Highness the DUTCHESS, on the memorable Victory gained by the DUKE against the Hollanders, June the 3. 1665. And on her Journey afterwards into the North.

MADAM,

WHEN, for our sakes, your hero you resign'd
To swelling seas, and every faithless wind;
When you releas'd his courage, and set free
A valour fatal to the enemy:
You lodg'd your country's cares within your breast
(The mansion where soft love should only rest:)
And, ere our foes abroad were overcome,
The noblest conquest you had gain'd at home.
Ah, what concerns did both your souls divide!
Your honour gave us what your love deny'd:

And 'twas for him much easier to subdue
Those foes he fought with, than to part from you.
That glorious day, which two such navies saw,
As each, unmatched, might to the world give law.
Neptune, yet doubtful whom he should obey,
Held to them both the trident of the sea :
The winds were hush'd, the waves in ranks were cast,
As awfully as when God's people past :
Those, yet uncertain on whose sails to blow,
These, where the wealth of nations ought to flow.
Then with the Duke your Highness rul'd the day,
While all the brave did his command obey,
The fair and pious under you did pray.
How powerful are chaste vows ! the wind and tide
You brib'd to combat on the English side.
'Thus to your much-lov'd Lord you did convey
An unknown succour sent the nearest way.
New vigour to his wearied arms you brought,
(So Moses was upheld while Israel fought)
While, from afar, we heard the cannon play,
Like distant thunder on a shiny day.
For absent friends we were ashamed to fear,
When we consider'd what you ventur'd there.
Ships, men and arms, our country might restore,
But such a leader could supply no more.
With generous thoughts of conquest he did burn,
Yet fought not more to vanquish than return.
Fortune and Victory he did pursue,
To bring them as his slaves to wait on you.
'Thus beauty ravish'd the rewards of fame,
And the fair triumph'd when the brave o'ercame.
Then, as you meant to spread another way
By land your conquests, far as his by sea,

Leaving our Southern clime, you march'd along
 The stubborn North, ten thousand Cupids strong.
 Like commons the nobility resort,
 In crowding heaps to fill your moving court :
 To welcome your approach the vulgar run,
 Like some new envoy from the distant sun,
 And country-beauties by their lovers go,
 Blessing themselves, and wond'ring at the show.
 So when the new-born Phoenix first is seen,
 Her feather'd subjects all adore their queen ;
 And while she makes her progress through the east,
 From ev'ry grove her num'rous train's increast :
 Each poet of the air her glory sings,
 And round him the pleas'd audience clap their wings.

And now, Sir, 'tis time I should relieve you from
 the tedious length of this account. You have better
 and more profitable employment for your hours, and
 I wrong the public to detain you longer. In conclu-
 sion, I must leave my poem to you with all its faults,
 which I hope to find fewer in the printing by your
 emendations. I know you are not of the number of
 those of whom the younger Pliny speaks; "*Nec sunt*
 "*parum multi, qui carpere amicos suos judicium vo-*
 "*cant :*" I am rather too secure of you on that side.
 Your candor in pardoning my errors may make you
 more remiss in correcting them ; if you will not withal
 consider that they come into the world with your ap-
 probation, and through your hands. I beg from you
 the greatest favour you can confer upon an absent
 person, since I repose upon your management what is

dearest to me, my fame and reputation; and therefore I hope it will stir you up to make my poem fairer by many of your blots; if not, you know the story of the gamester, who married the rich man's daughter, and, when her father denied the portion, christen'd all the children by his surname, that if, in conclusion, they must beg, they should do so by one name, as well as by the other. But since the reproach of my faults will light on you, 'tis but reason I should do you that justice to the readers, to let them know, that, if there be any thing tolerable in this poem, they owe the argument to your choice, the writing to your encouragement, the correction to your judgment, and the care of it to your friendship, to which he must ever acknowledge himself to owe all things, who is,

S I R

The most obedient, and most

Faithful of your servants,

From Carlton in Wiltshire,

Nov. 10. 1666.

JOHN DRYDEN.

ANNUS MIRABILIS:

THE

YEAR OF WONDERS,

M, DC, LXVI.

I.

IN thriving arts long time had Holland grown,
Crouching at home, and cruel when abroad :

Scarce leaving us the means to claim our own ;

Our king they courted, and our merchants aw'd.

II.

Trade, which, like blood, should circularly flow,

Stopp'd in their channels, found its freedom lost :

Thither the wealth of all the world did go,

And seem'd but shipwreck'd on so base a coast.

III.

For them alone the heavens had kindly heat,

* In eastern quarries ripening precious dew :

For them the Idumaeon balm did sweat,

And in hot Ceylon spicy forests grew.

* *In eastern quarries, &c.]* Precious stones at first are dew, condensed and hardened by the warmth of the sun, or subterranean fires.

IV.

The sun but seem'd the lab'rer of the year;

* Each waxing moon supply'd her watry store,
To swell those tides, which from the line did bear
Their brim-full vessels to the Belgian shore.

V.

Thus, mighty in her ships, stood Carthage long,
And swept the riches of the world from far;
Yet stoop'd to Rome, less wealthy, but more strong :
And this may prove our second Punic war.

VI.

What peace can be, where both to one pretend ?
(But they more diligent, and we more strong)
Or if a peace, it soon must have an end;
For they would grow too powerful, were it long.

VII.

Behold two nations then, engag'd so far,
That each seven years the fit must shake each land :
Where France will side to weaken us by war,
Who only can his vast designs withstand.

VIII.

See how he feeds th' Iberian † with delays,
To render us his timely friendship vain :
And, while his secret soul on Flanders preys,
He rocks the cradle of the babe of Spain.

IX.

Such deep designs of empire does he lay
O'er them, whose cause he seems to take in hand;

* *Each waxing, &c.*] According to their opinion,
who think, that great heap of waters, under the line,
is depressed into tides by the moon, towards the poles.

† *Tb' Iberian.*] The Spaniard.

And, prudently, would make them lords at sea,
To whom with ease he can give laws by land.

X.

This saw our king; and long within his breast
His pensive counsels balanc'd to and fro :
He griev'd the land he freed should be oppress'd,
And he less for it than usurpers do.

XI.

His gen'rous mind the fair ideas drew
Of fame and honour, which in dangers lay;
Where wealth, like fruit on precipices, grew,
Not to be gather'd, but by birds of prey.

XII.

The loss and gain each fatally were great ;
And still his subjects call'd aloud for war :
But peaceful kings, o'er martial people set,
Each other's poize and counterbalance are.

XIII.

He, first, survey'd the charge with careful eyes,
Which none but mighty monarchs could maintain ;
Yet judg'd, like vapours that from lembics rise,
It would in richer showers descend again.

XIV.

At length resolv'd t' assert the watry ball,
He in himself did whole armado's bring :
Him aged seamen might their master call,
And chuse for general, were he not their king.

XV.

It seems as ev'ry ship their sovereign knows,
His awful summons they so soon obey ;

So hear the scaly herd when * Proteus blows,
And so to pasture follow through the sea.

XVI.

To see this fleet upon the ocean move,
Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies ;
And heav'n, as if there wanted lights above,
For tapers made two glaring comets rise.

XVII.

Whether they unctuous exhalations are,
Fir'd by the sun, or seeming so alone :
Or each some more remote and slippery star,
Which loses footing when to mortals shewn.

XVIII.

Or one, that bright companion of the sun,
Whose glorious aspect seal'd our new-born king ;
And now a round of greater years begun,
New influence from his walks of light did bring.

XIX.

Victorious York did, first, with fam'd success,
To his known valour make the Dutch give place :
Thus heav'n our monarch's fortune did confess,
Beginning conquest from his royal race.

XX.

But since it was decreed, auspicious king,
In Britain's right that thou shouldst wed the main,

* *When Proteus blows.*]

-----Coeruleus Proteus immania ponti

Armenta et magnas pascit sub gurgite phocas.

VIRG.

Heav'n, as a gage, would cast some precious thing,
And therefore doom'd that Lawfon should be slain.

XXI.

Lawfon amongst the foremost met his fate,
Whom sea-green Sirens from the rocks lament :
Thus as an off'ring for the Grecian state,
He first was kill'd, who first to battle went.

XXII.

* Their chief blown up, in air, not waves, expir'd,
To which his pride presum'd to give the law :
The Dutch confess'd heaven present, and retir'd,
And all was Britain the wide Ocean saw.

XXIII.

To nearest ports their shatter'd ships repair,
Where by our dreadful cannon they lay aw'd :
So rev'rently men quit the open air,
When thunder speaks the angry gods abroad.

XXIV.

† And now approach'd their fleet from India fraught,
With all the riches of the rising sun :
And precious sand ‡ from Southern climates brought,
The fatal regions where the war begun.

XXV.

Like hunted Castors, conscious of their store,
Their way-lay'd wealth to Norway's coast they bring :
There first the North's cold bosom spices bore,
And winter brooded on the eastern spring.

* The admiral of Holland.

† The attempt at Berghen.

‡ *Southern climates.*] Guinea.

XXVI.

By the rich scent we found our perfum'd prey,
 Which, flank'd with rocks, did close in covert lye :
 And round about their murd'ring cannon lay,
 At once to threaten and invite the eye.

XXVII.

Fiercer than cannon, and than rocks more hard,
 The English undertake th' unequal war :
 Seven ships alone, by which the port is barr'd,
 Besiege the Indies, and all Denmark dare.

XXVIII.

These fight like husbands, but like lovers those :
 These fain would keep, and those more fain enjo y
 And to such height their frantic passion grows,
 That what both love, both hazard to destroy.

XXIX.

Amidst whole heaps of spices lights a ball,
 And now their odours arm'd against them fly :
 Some preciously by shatter'd porcelain fall,
 And some by aromatic splinters die.

XXX.

And though by tempests of the prize bereft,
 In heav'n's inclemency some ease we find :
 Our foes we vanquish'd by our valour left,
 And only yielded to the seas and wind.

XXXI.

Nor wholly lost we so deserv'd a prey ;
 For storms, repenting, part of it restor'd :
 Which, as a tribute from the Baltic sea,
 The British ocean sent her mighty Lord.

XXXII.

Go, mortals, now, and vex yourselves in vain
 For wealth, which so uncertainly must come:

When what was brought so far, and with such pain,
Was only kept to lose it nearer home.

XXXIII.

The son, who, twice three months on th' ocean tost,
Prepar'd to tell what he had pass'd before,
Now sees in English ships the Holland coast,
And parents arms, in vain, stretch'd from the shore.

XXXIV.

This careful husband had been long away,
Whom his chaste wife and little children mourn;
Who on their fingers learn'd to tell the day,
On which their father promis'd to return.

XXXV.

(*) Such are the proud designs of human kind,
And so we suffer shipwreck every where!
Alas, what port can such a pilot find,
Who in the night of fate must blindly steer?

XXXVI.

The undistinguish'd seeds of good and ill
Heav'n in his bosom, from our knowledge hides;
And draws them in contempt of human skill,
Which oft, for friends, mistaken foes provides.

XXXVII.

Let Munster's prelate ever be accurst,
In whom we seek the † German faith in vain:
Alas, that he should teach the English first,
That fraud and avarice in the church could reign!

(*) *Such are, &c.*] From Petronius; "Si bene cal-
culum ponas, ubique fit naufragium."

† *The German faith.*] Tacitus faith of them, "Nul-
los mortalium fide aut armis ante Germanos esse."

XXXVIII.

Happy, who never trust a stranger's will,
 Whose friendship's in his interest understood!
 Since money giv'n but tempts him to be ill,
 When power is too remote to make him good.

XXXIX.

'Till now, alone the mighty nations strove;
 The rest, at gaze, without the lists did stand:
 And † threatening France, plac'd like a painted Jove,
 Kept idle thunder in his lifted hand.

XL.

That eunuch-guardian of rich Holland's trade,
 Who envies us what he wants pow'r t' enjoy;
 Whose noiseful valour does no foe invade,
 And weak assistance will his friends destroy.

XLI.

Offended that we fought without his leave,
 He takes this time his secret hate to shew:
 Which Charles does with a mind so calm receive,
 As one that neither seeks, nor shuns his foe.

XLII.

With France, to aid the Dutch, the Danes unite:
 France as their tyrant, Denmark as their slave.
 But when with one three nations join to fight,
 They silently confess that one more brave.

XLIII.

Lewis had chas'd the English from his shore;
 But Charles the French as subjects does invite:
 Would heav'n for each some Solomon restore,
 Who, by their mercy, may decide their right.

† War declared by France.

XLIV.

Were subjects so but only by their choice,
 And not from birth did forc'd dominion take,
 Our prince alone would have the public voice;
 And all his neighbours realms would deserts make.

XLV.

He without fear a dangerous war pursues,
 Which without rashness he began before.
 As honour made him first the danger chuse,
 So still he makes it good on virtue's score.

XLVI.

The doubled charge his subjects love supplies,
 Who, in that bounty to themselves are kind:
 So glad Egyptians see their Nilus rise,
 And in his plenty their abundance find.

XLVII.

With equal pow'r he does * two chiefs create,
 Two such as each seem'd worthiest when alone,
 Each able to sustain a nation's fate,
 Since both had found a greater in their own.

XLVIII.

Both great in courage, conduct, and in fame,
 Yet neither envious of the other's praise;
 Their duty, faith, and int'rest to the same,
 Like mighty part'ners equally they raise.

XLIX.

The prince long time had courted fortune's love,
 But once possess'd did absolutely reign:
 Thus with their Amazons the heroes strove,
 And conquer'd first those beauties they would gain.

* Prince Rupert and Duke Albemarle sent to sea.

L.

The Duke beheld, like Scipio, with disdain,
 That Carthage, which he ruin'd, rise once more ;
 And shook aloft the fasces of the main,
 To fright those slaves with what they felt before.

LI.

Together to the wat'ry camp they haste,
 Whom matrons passing to their children shew :
 Infants first vows for them to heav'n are cast,
 And † future people bless them as they go.

LII.

With them no riotous pomp, nor Asian train,
 T' infect a navy with their gaudy fears :
 To make slow fights, and victories but vain :
 But war, severely, like itself, appears.

LIII.

Diffusive of themselves, where'er they pass,
 They make that warmth in others they expect :
 Their valour works like bodies on a glass,
 And does its image on their men project.

LIV.

* Our fleet divides, and strait the Dutch appear,
 In number, and a fam'd commander, bold :
 The narrow seas can scarce their navy bear,
 Or crowded vessels can their soldiers hold.

LV.

The Duke, less numerous, but in courage more,
 On wings of all the winds to combat flies :
 His murd'ring guns a loud defiance roar,
 And bloody crosses on his flag-staffs rise.

(†) *Future people*.] “ *Examina infantium futurum-
 que populus.*” Plin. Jun. in Paneg. ad Traj.

* Duke of Albemarle's battle, first day.

LVI.

Both furl their sails, and strip them for the fight ;
 Their folded sheets dismiss the useless air ;
 † Th' Elean plains could boast no nobler fight,
 When struggling champions did their bodies bare.

LVII.

Born each by other in a distant line,
 The sea-built forts in dreadful order move :
 So vast the noise, as if not fleets did join,
 * But lands unfix'd, and floating nations strove.

LVIII.

Now pass'd, on either side they nimbly tack ;
 Both strive to intercept and guide the wind :
 And in its eye more closely they come back,
 To finish all the deaths they left behind.

LIX.

On high-rais'd decks the haughty Belgians ride,
 Beneath whose shade our humble frigats go :
 Such port the Elephant bears, and so defy'd
 By the Rhinoceros her unequal foe.

LX.

And as the built, so diff'rent is the fight ;
 Their mounting shot is on our sails design'd :
 Deep in their hulls our deadly bullets light,
 And through the yielding planks a passage find.

LXI.

Our dreaded admiral from far they threat,
 Whose batter'd rigging their whole war receives :
 † Th' Elean, &c.] Where the Olympic games were
 celebrated.

* Land unfix'd.] From Virgil. " Credas innare
 " revulsas Cycladas," &c.

All bare, like some old oak which tempests beat,
He stands, and sees below his scatter'd leaves.

LXII.

Heroes of old, when wounded, shelter fought;
But he, who meets all danger with disdain,
E'en in their face his ship to anchor brought,
And steeple high stood prop'd upon the main.

LXIII.

At this excess of courage, all amaz'd,
The foremost of his foes a while withdraw:
With such respect in enter'd Rome they gaz'd,
Who on high chairs the god-like fathers saw.

LXIV.

And now, as where Patroclus' body lay,
Here Trojan chiefs advanc'd, and there the Greek;
Ours o'er the Duke their pious wings display,
And theirs the noblest spoils of Britain seek.

LXV.

Mean time his busy mariners he hastes;
His shatter'd sails with rigging to restore;
And willing pines ascend his broken masts,
Whose lofty heads rise higher than before.

LXVI.

Straight to the Dutch he turns his dreadful prow,
More fierce th' important quarrel to decide:
Like swans, in long array his vessels show,
Whose crests, advancing, do the waves divide.

LXVII.

They charge, re-charge, and all along the sea
They drive, and squander the huge Belgian fleet.
Berkley alone, who nearest danger lay,
Did a like fate with lost Creusa meet.

LXVIII.

The night comes on, we eager to pursue
 The combat still, and they asham'd to leave :
 Till the last streaks of dying day withdrew,
 And doubtful moonlight did our rage deceive.

LXIX.

In th' English fleet each ship resounds with joy,
 And loud applause of their great leader's fame :
 In fiery dreams the Dutch they still destroy,
 And, slumbering, smile at the imagin'd flame.

LXX.

Not so the Holland fleet, who, tir'd and done,
 Stretch'd on their decks like weary oxen lie :
 Faint sweats all down their mighty members run,
 (Vast bulks which little souls but ill supply.)

LXXI.

In dreams they fearful precipices tread,
 Or, shipwreck'd, labour to some distant shore :
 Or in dark churches walk among the dead ;
 They wake with horror, and dare sleep no more.

LXXII.

* The morn they look on with unwilling eyes,
 Till, from their main-top, joyful news they hear
 Of ships, which by their mould bring new supplies,
 And in their colours Belgian lions bear.

LXXIII.

Our watchful General had discern'd from far,
 This mighty succour which made glade the foe :
 He sigh'd, but, like a father of the war,
 † His face spake hope, while deep his sorrows flow.

* Second day's battle.

† *His face, &c.*] Spem vultu simulat, premit alto
 corde dolorem. Virg.

LXXIV.

His wounded men he first sends off to shore,
Never, till now, unwilling to obey :
They not their wounds, but want of strength deplore,
And think them happy, who with him can stay.

LXXV.

Then, to the rest, Rejoice, said he, to day ;
In you the fortune of Great Britain lies :
Among so brave a people you are they,
Whom heav'n has chose to fight for such a prize.

LXXVI.

If number English courages could quell,
We should at first have shunn'd, not met, our foes ;
Whose numerous sails the fearful only tell :
Courage from hearts, and not from numbers grows.

LXXVII.

He said ; nor needed more to say : With haste
To their known stations chearfully they go ;
And all at once, disdaining to be last,
Solicit every gale to meet the foe.

LXXVIII.

Nor did th' encourag'd Belgians long delay,
But bold in others, not themselves, they stood :
So thick, our navy scarce could steer their way,
But seem'd to wander in a moving wood.

LXXIX.

Our little fleet was now engag'd so far,
That, like the sword-fish in the whale, they fought :
The combat only seem'd a civil war,
Till through their bowels we our passage wrought.

LXXX.

Never had valour, no not ours, before,
 Done aught like this upon the land or main,
 Where not to be o'ercome was to do more
 Than all the conquests former kings did gain.

LXXXI.

The mighty ghosts of our great Harries rose,
 And armed Edwards look'd, with anxious eyes,
 To see this fleet among unequal foes,
 By which fate promis'd them their Charles should rise.

LXXXII.

Mean time the Belgians tack upon our rear,
 And raking chase-guns thro' our sterns they send:
 Close by, their fire-ships, like jackals, appear,
 Who on their lions for the prey attend.

LXXXIII.

Silent in smoke of cannon they came on:
 (Such vapours once did fiery Cacus hide:)
 In these the height of pleas'd revenge is shewn,
 Who burn contented by another's side.

LXXXIV.

Sometimes, from fighting squadrons of each fleet,
 Deceiv'd themselves, or to preserve some friend,
 Two grapling Ætna's on the ocean meet,
 And English fires with Belgian flames contend.

LXXXV.

Now, at each tack, our little fleet grows less;
 And, like maim'd fowl, swim lagging on the main:
 Their greater loss their numbers scarce confess,
 While they lose cheaper than the English gain.

LXXXVI.

Have you not seen, when, whistled from the fist,
 Some falcon stoops at what her eye design'd,
 And with her eagerness the quarry miss'd,
 Straight flies at check, and clips it down the wind?

LXXXVII.

The dastard crow, that to the wood made wing,
 And sees the groves no shelter can afford,
 With her loud kaws her craven kind does bring,
 Who, safe in numbers, cuff the noble bird.

LXXXVIII.

Among the Dutch thus Albemarle did fare :
 He could not conquer, and disdain'd to flee ;
 Past hope of safety, 'twas his latest care,
 Like falling Caesar, decently to die.

LXXXIX.

Yet pity did his manly spirit move,
 To see those perish who so well had fought ;
 And, generously, with his despair he strove,
 Resolv'd to live, till he their safety wrought.

XC.

Let other Muses write his prosp'rous fate,
 Of conquer'd nations tell, and kings restor'd :
 But mine shall sing of his eclips'd estate,
 Which, like the sun's, more wonders does afford.

XCI.

He drew his mighty frigates all before,
 On which the foe his fruitless force employs :
 His weak ones deep into his rear he bore,
 Remote from guns, as sick men from the noise.

XCII.

His fiery cannon did their passage guide,
 And following smoke obscur'd them from the foe :

Thus Israel safe from the Egyptians pride,
By flaming pillars, and by clouds did go.

XCIII.

Elsewhere the Belgian force we did defeat,
But here our courages did theirs subdue:
So Xenophon once led that fam'd retreat,
Which first the Asian empire overthrew.

XCIV.

The foe approach'd ; and one, for his bold sin,
Was sunk ; as he that touch'd the ark was slain :
The wild waves master'd him, and suck'd him in,
And smiling eddies dimpled on the main.

XCV.

This seen, the rest at awful distance stood ;
As if they had been there as servants set,
To stay, or to go on, as he thought good,
And not pursue, but wait on his retreat.

XCVI.

So Libyan huntsmen, on some sandy plain,
From shady covers rous'd, the lion chace :
The kingly beast roars out with loud disdain,
* And slowly moves, unknowing to give place.

XCVII.

But if some one approach to dare his force,
He swings his tail, and swiftly turns him round ;
With one paw seizes on his trembling horse,
And with the other tears him to the ground.

XCVIII.

Amidst these toils succeeds the balmy night ;
Now hissing waters the quench'd guns restore ;

* *The simile is Virgil's ; Vestigia retro impropinata
refert, &c.*

† And weary waves, withdrawing from the fight,
Lie lull'd and panting on the silent shore.

XCIX.

The moon shone clear on the beclamed flood,
Where while her beams like glitt'ring silver play,
Upon the deck our careful General stood,
And deeply mus'd on the ‡ succeeding day.

C.

That happy sun, said he, will rise again,
Who twice victorious did our navy see :
And I alone must view him rise in vain,
Without one ray of all his star for me.

CI.

Yet, like an English gen'ral will I die,
And all the ocean make my spacious grave :
Women and cowards on the land may lie :
The sea's a tomb that's proper for the brave.

CII.

Restless he pass'd the remnant of the night,
Till the fresh air proclaim'd the morning nigh :
And burning ships, the martyrs of the fight,
With paler fires beheld the eastern sky.

CIII.

But now, his stores of ammunition spent,
His naked valour is his only guard :

† *Weary waves.* From Statius Sylv.

Nec trucibus fluviis idem sonus; occidit horror
Æquoris, antennis maria acclinata quiescunt.

‡ The 3d of June, famous for two former victories.

* Rare thunders are from his dumb cannon sent,
And solitary guns are scarcely heard.

CIV.

Thus far had Fortune pow'r, he forc'd to stay,
Nor longer durst with Virtue be at strife :
This, as a ransom, Albemarle did pay,
For all the glories of so great a life.

CV.

For now brave Rupert from afar appears,
Whose waving streamers the glad General knows :
With full-spread sails, his eager navy steers,
And ev'ry ship in swift proportion grows.

CVI.

The anxious prince had heard the cannon long,
And from that length of time dire omens drew
Of English overmatch'd, and Dutch too strong,
Who never fought three days, but to pursue.

CVII.

Then, as an eagle, who, with pious care,
Was beating widely on the wing for prey,
To her now silent ciry does repair,
And finds her callow infants forc'd away :

CVIII.

Stung with her love, she stoops upon the plain,
The broken air loud whistling as she flies :
She stops, and listens, and shoots forth again,
And guides her pinions by her young ones cries.

CIX.

With such kind passion hastes the prince to fight,
And spreads his flying canvas to the found :

* Third day.

Him, whom no danger, were he there, could fright,
Now, absent, every little noise can wound.

CX.

As, in a drought, the thirsty creatures cry,
And gape upon the gather'd clouds for rain;
And first the martlet meets it in the sky,
And, with wet wings, joys all the feather'd train.

CXI.

With such glad hearts did our despairing men
Salute th' appearance of the prince's fleet:
And each ambitiously would claim the ken,
That with first eyes did distant safety meet,

CXII.

The Dutch, who came like greedy hinds before,
To reap the harvest their ripe ears did yield,
Now look like those, when rowling thunders roar,
And sheets of lightning blast the standing field.

CXIII.

Full in the prince's passage, hills of sand,
And dang'rous flats, in secret ambush lay,
Where the false tides skim o'er the cover'd land,
And seamen with dissembled depths betray.

CXIV.

The wily Dutch, who, like fall'n angels, fear'd
This new Messiah's coming, there did wait,
And round the verge their braving vessels steer'd,
To tempt his courage with so fair a bait.

CXV.

But he, unmov'd, contemns their idle threat,
Secure of fame, when e're he pleas'd to fight:
His cold experience tempers all his heat,
And inbred worth doth boasting valour slight.

CXVI.

Heroic virtue did his actions guide,
 And he the substance not th' appearance chose:
 To rescue one such friend, he took more pride,
 Than to destroy whole thousands of such foes.

CXVII.

But, when approach'd, in strict embraces bound,
 Rupert and Albemarle together grow:
 He joys to have his friend in safety found,
 Which he to none but to that friend would owe.

CXVIII.

The chearful soldiers, with new stores supply'd,
 Now long to execute their spleenful will;
 And, in revenge for those three days they try'd,
 Wish one, like Joshua's, when the sun stood still.

CXIX.

Thus re-inforc'd, against the adverse fleet,
 Still doubling ours, brave Rupert leads the way:
 † With the first blushes of the morn they meet,
 And bring night back upon the new-born day.

CXX.

His presence soon blows up the kindling fight,
 And his loud guns speak thick like angry men:
 It seems as slaughter had been breath'd all night,
 And death new-pointed his dull dart again.

CXXI.

The Dutch too well his mighty conduct knew,
 And matchless courage, since the former fight:
 Whose navy still a stiff-stretch'd cord did shew,
 'Till he bore in, and bent them into flight.

† Fourth day's battle.

CXXII.

The wind he shares, while half their fleet offends
 His open side, and high above him shows :
 Upon the rest at pleasure he descends,
 And, doubly harm'd, he double harms bestows.

CXXIII.

Behind, the Gen'ral mends his weary pace,
 And fullenly to his revenge he sails :
 * So glides some trodden serpent on the grass,
 And long behind his wounded volume trails.

CXXIV.

Th' increasing found is borne to either shore,
 And for their stakes the throwing nations fear :
 Their passions double with the cannons roar,
 And with warm wishes each man combats there.

CXXV.

Ply'd thick and close as when the fight begun,
 Their huge unwieldy navy wastes away :
 So sicken weaning moons too near the sun,
 And blunt their crescents on the edge of day.

CXXVI.

And now reduc'd on equal terms to fight,
 Their ships like wasted patrimonies show ;
 Where the thin scatt'ring trees admit the light,
 And shun each other's shadows as they grow.

* *So glides, &c.*

*From Virgil. Quum medii nexus extremaeque agmina
 caudae*

*Solvuntur; tardosque trahit sinus ulti-
 mus orbes.*

CXXVII.

The warlike prince had sever'd from the rest
Two giant ships, the pride of all the main ;
Which, with his one, so vigorously he prefs'd,
And flew so home, they could not rise again.

CXXVIII.

Already batter'd, by his lee they lay,
In vain upon the passing winds they call :
The passing winds thro' their torn canvass play,
And flagging sails on heartless sailors fall.

CXXIX.

Their open'd sides receive a gloomy light,
Dreadful as day let into shades below :
Without, grim death rides barefac'd in their sight,
And urges ent'ring billows as they flow.

CXXX.

When one dire shot, the last they could supply,
Close by the board the prince's main-mast bore;
All three, now helpless, by each other lie,
And this offends not, and those fear no more.

CXXXI.

So have I seen some fearful hare maintain
A course, till tir'd before the dog she lay ;
Who, stretch'd behind her, pants upon the plain,
Past pow'r to kill, as she to get away.

CXXXII.

With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey ;
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies ;
She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away,
And looks back to him with beseeching eyes.

CXXXIII.

The prince unjustly does his stars accuse,
Which hinder'd him to push his fortune on;
For what they to his courage did refuse,
By mortal valour never must be done.

CXXXIV.

This lucky hour the wise Batavian takes,
And warns his tatter'd fleet to follow home:
Proud to have so got off with equal stakes,
* Where 'twas a triumph not to be o'ercome.

CXXXV.

The General's force as kept alive by flight,
Now not oppos'd, no longer can pursue:
Lasting till heav'n had done his courage right;
When he had conquer'd, he his weakness knew.

CXXXVI.

He casts a frown on the departing foe,
And sighs to see him quit the watery field:
His stern fix'd eyes no satisfaction show,
For all the glories which the fight did yield.

CXXXVII.

Though, as when fiends did miracles avow,
He stands confess'd even by the boastful Dutch:
He only does his conquest disavow,
And thinks too little what they found too much.

CXXXVIII.

Return'd, he with the fleet resolv'd to stay;
No tender thoughts of home his heart divide:

* *From Horace, Quos opimus Fallere et effugere
est triumphus.*

Domestic joys and cares he puts away ;
For realms are households which the great must guide.

CXXXIX.

As those, who unripe veins in mines explore,
On the rich bed again the warm turf lay,
Till time digests the yet imperfect ore,
And know it will be gold another day :

CXL.

So looks our Monarch on this early fight,
Th' essay, and rudiments of great success :
Which all-maturing time must bring to light,
While he, like heav'n, does each day's labour bless.

CXLI.

Heav'n ended not the first or second day,
Yet each was perfect to the work design'd :
God and kings work, when they their works survey,
A passive aptness in all subjects find.

CXLII.

* In burden'd vessels, first, with speedy care,
His plenteous stores do season'd timber send ;
Thither the brawny carpenters repair,
And, as the surgeons of maim'd ships, attend.

CXLIII.

With cord and canvass from rich Hamburgh sent,
His navies molted wings he imp's once more :
Tall Norway fir their masts in battle spent,
And English oak sprung leaks and planks restore.

CXLIV.

All hands employ'd † the royal work grows warm :
Like lab'ring bees on a long summer's day,

* His Majesty repairs the fleet.

† “ Fervet opus : ” The same similitude in Virgil.

Some found the trumpet for the rest to swarm,
And some on bells of tasted lilies play.

CXLV.

With glewy wax some new foundations lay
Of virgin-combs which from the roof are hung:
Some arm'd within doors upon duty stay,
Or tend the sick, or educate the young.

CXLVI.

So here, some pick out bullets from the sides,
Some drive old okum through each seam and rift:
Their left hand does calking iron guide,
The rattling mallet with the right they lift.

CXLVII.

With boiling pitch another near at hand
(From friendly Sweden brought) the seams instops:
Which well laid o'er the salt sea waves withstand,
And shakes them from the rising beak in drops.

CXLVIII.

Some the gall'd ropes with dawby marling bind,
Or fear-cloth masts with strong tarpawling coats:
To try new shrouds one mounts into the wind,
And one, below, their ease or stiffness notes.

CXLIX.

Our careful Monarch stands in person by,
His new-cast cannons firmness to explore:
The strength of big-corn'd powder loves to try,
And ball and cartrige sorts for every bore.

CL.

Each day brings fresh supplies of arms and men,
And ships which all last winter were abroad;
And such as fitted since the fight had been,
Or new from stocks were fallen into the road.

CLI.

* The goodly London in her gallant trim,
 The Phoenix, daughter of the vanish'd old,
 Like a rich bride does to the ocean swim,
 And on her shadow rides in floating gold.

CLII.

Her flag aloft spread ruffling to the wind,
 And sanguine streamers seem the flood to fire:
 The weaver, charm'd with what his loom design'd,
 Goes on to sea, and knows not to retire.

CLIII.

With roomy decks; her guns of mighty strength,
 Whose low-laid mouths each mounting billow
 laves:

Deep in her draught and warlike in her length,
 She seems a sea-wasp flying on the waves.

CLIV.

This martial present, piously design'd,
 The loyal city gave their best-lov'd king:
 And with a bounty ample as the wind,
 Built, fitted and maintain'd, to aid him bring.

CLV.

† By viewing Nature, Nature's hand-maid, Art
 Makes mighty things from small beginnings grow:
 Thus fishes first to shipping did impart,
 Their tail the rudder, and their head the prow.

CLVI.

Some log, perhaps, upon the waters swam,
 And useless drift, which, rudely cut within,

* The Royal London described.

† Digression concerning shipping and navigation.

And hollow'd, first a floating trough became,
And cross some riv'let passage did begin.

CLVII.

In shipping such as this, the Irish kern,
And untaught Indian, on the stream did glide :
Ere sharp-keel'd boats to stem the flood did learn,
Or fin-like oars did spread from either side.

CLVIII.

Add but a sail, and Saturn so appear'd,
When, from lost empire, he to exile went,
And with the golden age to Tyber steer'd,
Where coin and first commerce he did invent.

CLIX.

Rude as their ships, was navigation then ;
No useful compass or meridian known ;
Coasting, they kept the land within their ken,
And knew no north but when the Pole-star shone.

CLX.

Of all who since have us'd the open sea,
Than the bold English none more fame have won :
* Beyond the year, and out of heav'n's high way,
They make discoveries where they see no fun.

CLXI.

But, what so long in vain, and yet unknown,
By poor mankind's benighted wit is sought,
Shall in this age to Britain first be shown,
And hence be to admiring nations taught.

CLXII.

The ebbs of tides, and their mysterious flow,
We, as art's elements, shall understand,

* Extra anni solisque vias.

VIRG.

And as by line upon the ocean go,
Whose path shall be familiar as the land.

CLXIII.

* Instructed ships shall sail to quick commerce,
By which remotest regions are ally'd ;
Which makes one city of the universe ;
Where some may gain, and all may be supply'd.

CLXIV.

Then we upon our globe's last verge shall go,
And view the ocean leaning on the sky :
From thence our rolling neighbours we shall know,
And on the lunar world securely pry.

CLXV.

This I foretel, from † your auspicious care,
Who great in search of God and nature grow ;
Who best your wise Creator's praise declare,
Since best to praise his works, is best to know.

CLXVI.

O truly royal ! who behold the law
And rule of beings in your Maker's mind :
And thence, like lembics, rich ideas draw,
To fit the levell'd use of human-kind.

CLXVII.

But first the toils of war we must endure,
And from the injurious Dutch redeem the seas.
War makes the valiant of his right secure,
And gives up fraud to be chastis'd with ease.

CLXVIII.

Already were the Belgians on our coast,
Whose fleet more mighty ev'ry day became

* By a more exact measure of longitude.

† Apostrophe to the Royal Society.

By late success, which they did falsely boast,
And now, by first appearing, seem'd to claim.

CLXIX.

Designing, subtle, diligent, and close,
They knew to manage war with wise delay:
Yet all those arts their vanity did cross,
And, by their pride, their prudence did betray.

CLXX.

Nor staid the English long; but, well supply'd,
Appear as num'rous as th' insulting foe;
The combat now by courage must be try'd,
And the success the braver nation show.

CLXXI.

There was the Plymouth squadron now come in,
Which in the Straits last Winter was abroad;
Which twice on Biscay's working bay had been,
And on the mid-land sea the French had aw'd.

CLXXII.

Old expert Allen, loyal all along,
Fam'd for his action on the Smyrna fleet:
And Holmes, whose name shall live in epic song,
While music numbers, or while verse has feet.

CLXXIII.

Holmes, the Achates of the Gen'ral's fight;
Who first bewitch'd our eyes with Guinea gold:
As once old Cato in the Romans fight
The tempting fruits of Afric did unfold.

CLXXIV.

With him went Sprag, as bountiful as brave,
Whom his high courage to command had brought;
Harman, who did the twice-fir'd Harry save,
And in his burning ship undaunted fought.

CLXXV.

Young Hollis, on a Muse by Mars begot,
Born Caesar-like, to write and act great deeds :
Impatient to revenge his fatal shot,
His right-hand doubly to his left succeeds.

CLXXVI.

Thousands were there in darker fame that dwell,
Whose deeds some nobler poem shall adorn :
And, though to me unknown, they, sure, fought well,
Whom Rupert led, and who were British born.

CLXXVII.

Of ev'ry size an hundred fighting sail :
So vast the navy now at anchor rides,
That underneath it the press'd waters fail,
And, with its weight, it shoulders off the tides.

CLXXVIII.

Now anchors weigh'd, the seamen shout so shrill,
That heav'n and earth, and the wide ocean rings :
A Breeze from westward waits their sails to fill,
And rests, in those high beds, his downy wings.

CLXXIX.

The wary Dutch this gath'ring storm foresaw,
And durst not bide it on the English coast ;
Behind their treach'rous shallows they withdraw,
And there lay snares to catch the British host :

CLXXX.

So the false spider, when her nets are spread,
Deep ambush'd in her silent den does lie ;
And feels, far off, the trembling of her thread,
Whose filmy cord should bind the struggling fly.

CLXXXI.

Then, if, at last, she find him fast beset,
 She issues forth, and runs along her loom :
 She joys to touch the captive in her net,
 And drags the little wretch in triumph home.

CLXXXII.

The Belgians hop'd, that, with disorder'd haste,
 Our deep-cut keels upon the sands might run :
 Or, if with caution leisurely were past,
 Their num'rous grofs might charge us one by one.

CLXXXIII.

But, with a fore-wind pushing them above,
 And swelling tide that heav'd them from below,
 O'er the blind flats our warlike squadrons move,
 And, with spread sails, to welcome battle go.

CLXXXIV.

It seem'd as there the British Neptune stood,
 With all his hosts of waters at command,
 Beneath them to submit th' officious flood ;
 * And, with his trident, shov'd them off the sand.

CLXXXV.

To the pale foes they suddenly draw near,
 And summon them to unexpected fight :
 They start like murderers, when ghosts appear,
 And draw their curtains in the dead of night.

CLXXXVI.

† Now van to van the foremost squadrons meet,
 The midmost battles hast'ning up behind :

* -----levat ipse tridenti,

Et vastas aperit fyrtes, &c.

Ving.

† Second battle.

Who view, far off, the storm of falling fleet,
And hear their thunder ratt'ling in the wind.

CLXXXVII.

At length the adverse admirals appear;
The two bold champions of each country's right :
Their eyes describe the lists as they come near,
And draw the lines of death before they fight.

CLXXXVIII.

The distance judg'd for shot of every size,
The linestocks touch, the pond'rous ball expires ;
The vig'rous seamen ev'ry port-hole plies,
And adds his heart to every gun he fires.

CLXXXIX.

Fierce was the fight on the proud Belgians side,
For honour, which they seldom fought before :
But now they by their own vain boasts were ty'd,
And forc'd, at least in shew, to prize it more.

CXC.

But sharp remembrance on the English part,
And shame of being match'd by such a foe,
Rouze conscious virtue up in ev'ry heart,
† And seeming to be stronger makes them so.

CXCI.

Nor long the Belgians could that fleet sustain,
Which did two gen'ral's fates, and Caesar's bear :
Each several ship a victory did gain,
As Rupert or as Albemarle were there.

CXCII.

Their batter'd admiral too soon withdrew,
Unthank'd by ours for his unfinish'd fight :

* Possunt, quia posse videntur.

Virg.

But he the minds of his Dutch masters knew,
Who call'd that Providence, which we call'd flight.

CXCIII.

Never did men more joyfully obey,
Or sooner understood the sign to flee:
With such alacrity they bore away,
As if to praise them all the States stood by.

CXCIV.

O famous leader of the Belgian fleet,
Thy monument inscrib'd such praise shall wear,
As Varro, timely flying, once did meet,
Because he did not of his Rome despair.

CXCV.

Behold, that navy, which, a while before,
Provok'd the tardy English close to fight;
Now draw their beaten vessels close to shore,
As larks lie dar'd to shun the hobbies flight.

CXCVI.

Whoe'er would English monuments survey,
In other records may our courage know;
But let them hide the story of this day,
Whose fame was blemish'd by too base a foe.

CXCVII.

Or if too busily they will enquire
Into a victory, which we disdain;
Then let them know, the Belgians did retire
* Before the patron saint of injur'd Spain.

* *Patron saint.*] St James, on whose day this victory was gained.

CXCVIII.

Repenting England this revengeful day

† To Philip's manes did an off'ring bring;
England, which first, by leading them astray,
Hatch'd up rebellion to destroy her king.

CXCIX.

Our fathers bent their baneful industry,

To check a monarchy that slowly grew ;
But did not France or Holland's fate foresee,
Whose rising pow'r to swift dominion flew.

CC.

In fortune's empire blindly thus we go,

And wander after pathless destiny ;
Whose dark resorts since prudence cannot know,
In vain it would provide for what shall be.

CCI.

But what-e'er English to the blest'd shall go,

And the fourth Harry or first Orange meet ;
Find *him* disowning of a Bourbon foe,
And *him* detesting a Batavian fleet.

CCII.

Now on their coasts our conqu'ring navy rides,

Way-lays their merchants, and their land besets ;
Each day new wealth without their care provides ;
They ly asleep with prizes in their nets.

CCIII.

So close behind some promontory lie

The huge Leviathans, t' attend their prey ;

† *Philip's manes.*] Philip the second of Spain, against whom the Hollanders rebelling, were aided by Queen Elizabeth.

And give no chace, but swallow in the frie,
Which through their gaping jaws mistake the way.
CCIV.

Nor was this all; * in ports and roads remote,
Destructive fires among whole fleets we send;
Triumphant flames upon the waters float,
And out-bound ships at home their voyage end.
CCV.

Those various squadrons variously design'd,
Each vessel freighted with a several load,
Each squadron waiting for a several wind,
All find but one to burn them in the road.
CCVI.

Some, bound for Guinea, golden sand to find,
Bore all the gauds the simple natives wear;
Some, for the pride of Turkish courts design'd,
For folded turbants finest holland bear.
CCVII.

Some English wool, vex'd in a Belgian loom,
And into cloth of spungy softness made,
Did into France or colder Denmark doom,
To ruin with worse ware our staple trade.
CCVIII.

Our greedy seamen rummage every hold,
Smile on the booty of each wealthier chest;
And, as the priests, who with their gods make bold,
Take what they like, and sacrifice the rest.

* Burning of the fleet, in the Vly, by Sir Robert Holmes.

CCIX.

* But ah ! how unsincere are all our joys ! [stay ;
Which, sent from heav'n, like light'ning make no
Their palling taste the journey's length destroys,
Or grief, sent post, o'ertakes them on the way.

CCX.

Swell'd with our late successes on the foe,
Which France and Holland wanted pow'r to cross,
We urge an unseen fate to lay us low,
And feed their envious eyes with English loss.

CCXI.

Each element his dread command obeys,
Who makes or ruins with a smile or frown ;
Who, as by one he did our nation raise,
So, now, he with another pulls us down.

CCXII.

Yet, London, empress of the Northern clime,
By an high fate thou greatly didst expire ;
† Great as the world's, which, at the death of time,
Must fall, and raise a nobler frame by fire.

CCXIII.

As when some dire usurper heav'n provides,
To scourge his country with a lawless sway ;
His birth, perhaps, some petty village hides,
And sets his cradle out of fortune's way :

CCXIV.

'Till fully ripe, his swelling fate breaks out,
And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on :

* Transition to the fire of London.

† Quum mare, quum tellus, correptaque regia
coeli, Ardeat, &c. Ovid.

His prince, surpriz'd at first, no ill could doubt,
And wants the pow'r to meet it when 'tis known.

CCXV.

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
Which, in mean buildings first obscurely bred,
From thence did soon to open streets aspire,
And straight to palaces and temples spread.

CCXVI.

The diligence of trade, and noiseful gain,
And luxury, more late, asleep were laid :
All was the night's, and, in her silent reign,
No sound the rest of nature did invade.

CCXVII.

In this deep quiet, from what source unknown,
Those seeds of fire their fatal birth disclose;
And, first, few scatt'ring sparks about were blown,
Big with the flames that to our ruin rose.

CCXVIII.

Then in some close pent-room it crept along,
And, mould'ring as it went, in silence fed;
'Till th' infant monster, with devouring strong,
Walk'd boldly upright with exalted head.

CCXIX.

Now, like some rich or mighty murderer,
Too great for prison, which he breaks with gold;
Who fresher for new mischiefs does appear,
And dares the world to tax him with the old :

CCXX.

So scapes th' insulting fire his narrow jail,
And makes small out-lets into open air :
Their the fierce winds his tender force assail,
And beat him downward to his first repair.

CCXXI.

* The winds, like crafty courtezans, withheld
 His flames from burning, but to blow them more:
 And, every fresh attempt, he is repell'd
 With faint denials, weaker than before.

CCXXII.

And now, no longer letted of his prey,
 He leaps up at it with enrag'd desire;
 O'erlooks the neighbours with a wide survey,
 And nods at every house his threat'ning fire.

CCXXIII.

The ghosts of traitors from the Bridge descend,
 With bold fanatic spectres to rejoice:
 About the fire into a dance they bend,
 And sing their Sabbath notes with feeble voice.

CCXXIV.

Our guardian angel saw them where they sat
 Above the palace of our slumb'ring king:
 He sigh'd, abandoning his charge to fate,
 And, drooping, oft look'd back upon the wing.

CCXXV.

At length, the crackling noise and dreadful blaze
 Call'd up some waking lover to the sight;
 And long it was ere he the rest could raise,
 Whose heavy eyelids yet were full of night.

CCXXVI.

The next to danger, hot pursu'd by Fate,
 Half-cloth'd, half-naked, hastily retire:

* *Like crafty, &c.]* Hac arte tractabat cupidum virum, ut illius animum inopia accenderet.

And frightened mothers strike their breasts, too late,
For helpless infants left amidst the fire.

CCXXVII.

Their cries soon waken all the dwellers near ;
Now murmuring noises rise in ev'ry street :
The more remote run stumbling with their fear,
And, in the dark, men jostle as the meet.

CCXXVIII.

So weary bees in little cells repose :
But, if night-robbers lift the well-stor'd hive,
An humming through their waxen city grows,
And out upon each other's wings they drive.

CCXXIX.

Now streets grow throng'd and busy as by day :
Some run for buckets to the hallow'd quire :
Some cut the pipes, and some the engines play ;
And some, more bold, mount ladders to the fire.

CCXXX.

In vain : for, from the east, a Belgian wind
His hostile breath through the dry rafters sent ;
'The flames impell'd soon left their foes behind,
And forward, with a wanton fury, went.

CCXXXI.

A key of fire ran all along the shore,
* And lighten'd all the river with a blaze :
The waken'd tides began again to roar,
And wond'ring fish in shining waters gaze.

CCXXXII.

Old father Thames rais'd up his rev'rend head,
But fear'd the state of Simois would return ;

* Sigaea igni freta late relucens. VIRG.

Deep in his ooze he fought his fedy bed,
And shrunk his waters back into his urn.

CCXXXIII.

The fire, mean-time, walks in a broader grofs;
To either hand his wings he opens wide;
He wades the streets, and straight he reaches crofs,
And plays his longing flames on th' other side.

CCXXXIV.

At first they warm, then scorch, and then they take;
Now with long necks from side to side they feed;
At length, grown strong, their mother-fire forsake,
And a new colony of flames succeed.

CCXXXV.

To every nobler portion of the town
The curling billows rowl their restless tide;
In parties now they straggle up and down,
As armies, unoppos'd, for prey divide.

CCXXXVI.

One mighty squadron, with a side-wind sped,
Through narrow lanes his cumber'd fire does haste,
By powerful charms of gold and silver led,
The Lombard bankers and the Change to waste.

CCXXXVII.

Another backward to the Tow'r would go,
And slowly eats his way against the wind;
But the main body of the marching foe
Against th' imperial palace is design'd.

CCXXXVIII.

Now day appears, and with the day the king,
Whose early care had robb'd him of his rest;
Far off the cracks of falling houses ring,
And shrieks of subjects pierce his tender breast.

CCXXXIX.

Near as he draws, thick harbingers of smoke;
 With gloomy pillars, cover all the place;
 Whose little intervals of night are broke
 By sparks that drive against his sacred face.

CCXL.

More than his guards his sorrows made him known,
 And pious tears which down his cheeks did show'r:
 The wretched in his grief forgot their own;
 So much the pity of a king has pow'r.

CCXLI.

He wept the flames of what he lov'd so well,
 And what so well had merited his love:
 For never prince in grace did more excel,
 Or royal city more in duty strove.

CCXLII.

Nor with an idle care did he behold;
 (Subjects may grieve, but monarchs must redress;)
 He cheers the fearful, and commends the bold,
 And makes despairers hope for good success.

CCXLIII.

Himself directs what first is to be done,
 And orders all the succours which they bring:
 The helpful and the good about him run,
 And form an army worthy such a king.

CCXLIV.

He sees the dire contagion spread so fast,
 That, where it seizes, all relief is vain;
 And therefore must unwillingly lay waste
 That country, which would, else, the foe maintain.

CCXLV.

The powder blows up all before the fire:
 Th' amazed flames stand gather'd on a heap;

And from the precipice's brink retire,
Afraid to venture on so large a leap.

CCXLVI.

Thus fighting fires a while themselves consume,
But straight, like Turks, forc'd on to win or die,
They first lay tender bridges of their fume,
And o'er the breach in unctuous vapours fly.

CCXLVII.

Part stay for passage, till a gust of wind
Ships o'er their forces in a shining sheet:
Part, creeping under ground, their journey blind,
And climbing from below, their fellows meet.

CCXLVIII.

Thus, to some desert plain, or old wood-side,
Dire night-hags come from far, to dance their round;
And o'er broad rivers on their fiends they ride,
Or sweep in clouds above the blasted ground.

CCXLIX.

No help avails; for, hydra-like, the fire
Lifts up his hundred heads, to aim his way:
And scarce the wealthy can one half retire,
Before he rushes in to share the prey.

CCL.

The rich grow suppliant, and the poor grow proud;
Those offer mighty gain, and these ask more:
So void of pity is th' ignoble crowd,
When others ruin may increase their store.

CCLI.

As those, who live by shores, with joy behold
Some wealthy vessel split or stranded nigh;
And from the rocks leap down for shipwreck'd gold,
And seek the tempests which the others fly:

CCLII.

So these but wait the owners last despair,
And what's permitted to the flames invade ;
E'en from their jaws the hungry morsels tear,
And, on their backs, the spoils of Vulcan lade.

CCLIII.

The days were all in this lost labour spent ;
And when the weary king gave place to night,
His beams he to his royal brother lent,
And so shone still in his reflective light.

CCLIV.

Night came, but without darkness or repose,
A dismal picture of the gen'ral doom ;
Where souls distracted, when the trumpet blows,
And half unready with their bodies, come.

CCLV.

Those, who have homes, when home they do repair,
To a last lodging call their wand'ring friends :
Their short uneasy sleeps are broke with care,
To look how near their own destruction tends.

CCLVI.

Those, who have none, sit round where once it was,
And with full eyes each wonted room require :
Haunting the yet warm ashes of the place,
As murder'd men walk where they did expire.

CCLVII.

Some stir up coals, and watch the vestal fire,
Others in vain from sight of ruin run ;
And, while through burning lab'rins they retire,
With loathing eyes repeat what they would shun.

CCLVIII.

The most, in fields, like herded beasts, lie down,
To dews obnoxious, on the grassy floor ;

And, while their babes in sleep their sorrows drown,
Sad parents watch the remnants of their store.

CCLIX.

While by the motion of the flames they grieve,
What streets are burning now, and what are near,
An infant, waking, to the paps would press,
And meets, instead of milk, a falling tear.

CCLX.

No thought can ease them but their Sov'reign's care,
Whose praise th' afflicted as their comfort sing:
E'en those, whom want might drive to just despair,
Think life's a blessing under such a king.

CCLXI.

Mean time, he sadly suffers in their grief,
Out-weeps a hermit, and out-prays a faint:
All the long night he studies their relief,
How they may be supply'd, and he may want.

CCLXII.

* O God, said he, thou patron of my days,
Guide of my youth in exile and distress!
Who me unfriended brought'st, by wond'rous ways,
The kingdom of my fathers to possess:

CCLXIII.

Be thou my Judge, with what unwearied care
I since have labour'd for my people's good;
To bind the bruises of a civil war,
And stop the issues of their wasting blood.

CCLXIV.

Thou, who hast taught me to forgive the ill,
And recompense, as friends, the good mislaid;

* King's prayer.

If mercy be a precept of thy will,
Return that mercy on thy servant's head.

CCLXV.

Or, if my heedless youth has stepp'd astray,
Too soon forgetful of thy gracious hand;
On me alone thy just displeasure lay,
But take thy judgments from this mourning land.

CCLXVI.

We all have sinn'd, and thou hast laid us low,
As humble earth from whence at first we came:
Like flying shades before the clouds we shew,
And shrink like parchment in consuming flame.

CCLXVII.

O let it be enough what thou hast done;
When spotted deaths ran arm'd thro' ev'ry street,
With poison'd darts, which not the good could shun,
The speedy could out-fly, or valiant meet.

CCLXVIII.

The living few, and frequent funerals then,
Proclaim'd thy wrath on this forsaken place:
And now those few, who are return'd again,
Thy searching judgments to their dwellings trace.

CCLXIX.

O pass not, Lord, an absolute decree,
Or bind thy sentence unconditional:
But in thy sentence our remorse foresee,
And, in that foresight, this thy doom recal.

CCLXX.

Thy threatnings, Lord, as thine, thou may'st revoke;
But, if immutable and fix'd they stand,
Continue still thyself to give the stroke,
And let not foreign foes oppress thy land.

CCLXXI.

Th' Eternal heard, and from the heav'nly choir
Chose out the cherub with the flaming sword;
And bad him swiftly drive th' approaching fire
From where our naval magazines were stor'd.

CCLXXII.

The blessed minister his wings display'd,
And like a shooting star he cleft the night:
He charg'd the flames, and those that disobey'd,
He lash'd to duty with his sword of light.

CCLXXIII.

The fugitive flames, chastis'd, went forth to prey,
On pious structures, by our fathers rear'd;
By which to heav'n they did affect the way,
Ere faith in churchmen without works was heard.

CCLXXIV.

The wanting orphans saw, with wat'ry eyes,
Their founders charity in dust laid low;
And sent to God their ever-answer'd cries:
For he protects the poor who made them so.

CCLXXV.

Nor could thy fabric, Paul's, defend thee long,
Though thou wert sacred to thy Maker's praise:
Though made immortal by a poet's song;
And poets songs the Theban walls could raise.

CCLXXVI.

The daring flames peep'd in, and saw from far
The awful beauties of the sacred quire:
But since it was prophan'd by civil war,
Heav'n thought it fit to have it purg'd by fire.

CCLXXVII.

Now down the narrow streets it swiftly came,
And, widely opening, did on both sides prey;

This benefit we sadly owe the flame,
If only ruin must enlarge our way.

CCLXXVIII.

And now, four days the sun had seen our woes;
Four nights the moon beheld th' incessant fire;
It seem'd as if the stars more sickly rose,
And farther from the ferv'rish north retire.

CCLXXIX.

In th' empyrean heav'n, the blest'd abode,
The thrones and the dominions prostrate ly,
Not daring to behold their angry God;
And an hush'd silence damps the tuneful sky.

CCLXXX.

At length th' Almighty cast a pitying eye,
And mercy softly touch'd his melting breast;
He saw the town's one half in rubbish lie,
And eager flames drive on to storm the rest.

CCLXXXI.

An hollow crystal pyramid he takes,
In firmamental waters dipt above;
Of it a broad extinguisher he makes,
And hoods the flames that to their quarry strove.

CCLXXXII.

The vanquish'd fires withdraw from every place,
Or, full with feeding, sink into a sleep:
Each household genius shews again his face,
And from the hearths the little Lares creep.

CCLXXXIII.

Our king this more than natural change beholds;
With sober joys his heart and eyes abound:
To the All-good his lifted hands he folds,
And thanks him low on his redeemed ground.

CCLXXXIV.

As when sharp frosts had long constrain'd the earth,
 A kindly thaw unlocks it with cold rain ;
 And first the tender blade peeps up to birth, [grain.
 And straight the green fields laugh with promis'd

CCLXXXV.

By such degrees the spreading gladness grew
 In every heart, which fear had froze before :
 The standing streets with so much joy they view,
 That with less grief the perish'd they deplore.

CCLXXXVI.

The father of the people open'd wide
 His stores, and all the poor with plenty fed :
 Thus God's anointed God's own place supply'd,
 And fill'd the empty with his daily bread.

CCLXXXVII.

This royal bounty brought its own reward,
 And in their minds so deep did print the sense ;
 That, if their ruins sadly they regard,
 'Tis but with fear, the sight might drive him thence.

CCLXXXVIII.

* But so may he live long, that town to sway,
 Which by his auspice they will nobler make,
 As he will hatch their ashes by his stay,
 And not their humble ruins now forsake.

CCLXXXIX.

They have not lost their loyalty by fire ;
 Nor is their courage or their wealth so low,
 That from his wars they poorly would retire,
 Or beg the pity of a vanquish'd foe.

* City's request to the king not to leave them.

CCXC.

Not with more constancy the Jews of old,
 By Cyrus from rewarded exile sent,
 Their royal city did in dust behold,
 Or with more vigour to rebuild it went.

CCXCI.

The utmost malice of the stars is past,
 And two dire comets, which have scourg'd the town,
 In their own plague and fire have breath'd their last,
 Or, dimly, in their sinking sockets frown.

CCXCII.

Now frequent trines the happier lights among,
 And high-rais'd Jove from his dark prison freed,
 (Those weights took off that on his planet hung)
 Will gloriously the new-laid works succeed.

CCXCIII.

Methinks already, from this chymic flame,
 I see a city of more precious mold :
 Rich as the town which gives the * Indies name,
 With silver pav'd, and all divine with gold.

CCXCIV.

Already, labouring with a mighty fate,
 She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow,
 And seems to have renew'd her charter's date,
 Which heav'n will to the death of time allow.

CCXCV.

More great than human, now, and more † August,
 New deified she from her fires does rise :

* Mexico.

† Augusta, the old name of London.

Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

CCXCVI.

Before, she like some shepherdes did show,
Who sat to bathe her by a river's side;
Not answering to her fame, but rude and low,
Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern pride.

CCXCVII.

Now, like a maiden queen, she will behold,
From her high turrets, hourly suitors come:
The East with incense, and the West with gold,
Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her doom.

CCXCVIII.

The silent Thames, her own domestic flood,
Shall bear her vessels, like a sweeping train;
And often wind, as of his mistress proud,
With longing eyes to meet her face again.

CCXCIX.

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
The glory of their towns no more shall boast,
And Sein, that would with Belgian rivers join,
Shall find her lustre stain'd, and traffic lost.

CCC.

The vent'rous merchant, who design'd more far,
And touches on our hospitable shore,
Charm'd with the splendor of this Northern star,
Shall here unlade him, and depart no more.

CCCI.

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet,
The wealth of France or Holland to invade:
The beauty of this town, without a fleet,
From all the world shall vindicate her trade.

CCCII.

And, while this fam'd emporium we prepare,
 The British ocean shall such triumphs boast,
 That those, who now disdain our trade to share,
 Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

CCCIII.

Already we have conquer'd half the war,
 And the less dangerous part is left behind ;
 Our trouble now is but to make them dare,
 And not so great to vanquish as to find.

CCCIV.

Thus to the Eastern wealth through storms we go,
 But now, the cape once doubled, fear no more ;
 A constant trade-wind will securely blow,
 And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

THRENODIA AUGUSTALIS:

A Funeral PINDARIC POEM, sacred to the
 happy Memory of King CHARLES II.

*Fortunati ambo ! si quid mea carmina possunt,
 Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet aevo.* VIRG.

I.

THUS long my grief has kept me dumb :
 Sure there's a lethargy in mighty woe ;
 Tears stand congeal'd, and cannot flow ;
 And the sad soul retires into her inmost room :

Tears, for a stroke foreseen, afford relief ;
But, unprovided for a sudden blow,
Like Niobe we marble grow ;
And petrify with grief.
Our British heav'n was all serene ;
No threat'ning cloud was nigh,
Not the least wrinkle to deform the sky :
We liv'd as unconcern'd and happily,
As the first age in nature's golden scene.
Supine amidst our flowing store,
We slept securely, and we dream'd of more :
When suddenly the thunder-clap was heard :
It took us unprepar'd, and out of guard,
Already lost before we fear'd.
Th' amazing news of Charles at once was spread ;
At once the general voice declar'd,
“ Our gracious prince was dead.”
No sickness known before, no slow disease,
To soften grief by just degrees :
But, like an hurrican on Indian seas.
The tempest rose ;
An unexpected burst of woes ;
With scarce a breathing place betwixt,
This Now becalm'd, and perishing the next.
As if great Atlas from his height
Should sink beneath his heav'nly weight,
And, with a mighty flaw, the flaming wall
(As once it shall) [this nether ball ;
Shou'd gape immense, and, rushing down, o'erwhelm
So swift and so surprising was our fear :
Our Atlas fell ineed ; but Hercules was near.

II.

His pious brother, sure the best
Who ever bore that name,
Was newly risen from his rest;
And, with a fervant flame,
His usual morning vows had just addrest
For his dear sov'reign's health;
And hop'd to have 'em heard,
In long increase of years,
In honour, fame, and wealth.
Guileless of greatness thus he always pray'd,
Nor knew, nor wish'd those vows he made
On his own head shou'd be repaid.
Soon as th' ill-omen'd rumour reach'd his ear,
(Ill news is wing'd with fate, and flies apace)
Who can describe th' amazement in his face!
Horror in all his pomp was there,
Mute and magnificent without a tear;
And then the Hero first was seen to fear.
Half unarray'd he ran to his relief,
So hasty and so artless was his grief:
Approaching greatness met him with her charms
Of pow'r and future state;
But look'd so ghastly in a brother's fate,
He shook her from his arms.
Arriv'd within the mournful room, he saw
God's image, God's anointed, lay;
A wild distraction, void of awe,
And arbitrary grief unbounded by a law;
Without motion, pulse, or breath,
A senseless lump of sacred clay,
An image, now, of death:

Amidst his sad attendants groans and cries ;
 The lines of that ador'd, forgiving face,
 Distorted from their native grace ;
 An iron slumber sat on his majestic eyes.
 The pious duke-----forbear, audacious Muse,
 No terms, thy feeble art can use,
 Are able to adorn so vast a woe :
 The grief of all the rest like subject-grief did show ;
 His like a sov'reign did transcend ;
 No wife, no brother, such a grief cou'd know,
 Nor any name, but friend.

III.

O wondrous changes of a fatal scene,
 Still varying to the last !
 Heav'n, though its hard decree was past,
 Seem'd pointing to a gracious turn again ;
 And death's up-lifted arm arrested in its haste.
 Heav'n half repented of the doom,
 And almost griev'd it had foreseen,
 What by foresight it will'd eternally to come.
 Mercy above did hourly plead
 For her resemblance here below :
 And mild forgiveness intercede
 To stop the coming blow.
 New miracles approach'd th' etherial throne,
 Such as his wond'rous life had oft and lately known,
 And urg'd that still they might be shown.
 On earth his pious brother pray'd and vow'd,
 Renouncing greatness at so dear a rate,
 Himself defending what he cou'd
 From all the glories of his future fate.
 With him th' innumerable croud

Of armed prayers
 Knock'd at the gates of Heav'n, and knock'd aloud ;
 The first well-meaning rude petitioners,
 All for his life assail'd the throne,
 All wou'd have brib'd the skies, by offering up their own.
 So great a throng not heav'n itself cou'd bar ;
 'Twas almost born by force, as in the giants war.
 The pray'rs, at least, for his reprieve was heard ;
 His death, like Hezekiah's, was deferr'd :
 Against the sun the shadow went ;
 Five days, those five degrees, were lent
 To form our patience, and prepare th' event.
 The second causes took the swift command,
 The med'cinal head, the ready hand,
 All eager to perform their part ;
 All but eternal doom was conquer'd by their art :
 Once more the fleeting soul came back
 T' inspire the mortal frame,
 And in the body took a doubtful stand,
 Doubtful and hov'ring like expiring flame, [brand.
 That mounts and falls by turns, and trembles o'er the
 IV.

The joyful short-liv'd news, soon spread around,
 Took the same train, the same impetuous bound :
 The drooping town in smiles again was drest ;
 Gladness, in every face exprest,
 Their eyes before their tongues confest.
 Men met each other with erected look,
 The steps were higher that they took ;
 Each to congratulate his friend made haste,
 And long inveterate foes saluted as they past.

Above the rest heroic James appear'd,
 Exalted more, because he more had fear'd :
 His manly heart, whose noble pride
 Was still above
 Dissembled hate, or varnish'd love,
 Its more than common transport could not hide ;
 But, like an * eagle, rode in triumph o'er the tide.
 Thus, in alternate course,
 The tyrant passions, hope and fear,
 Did in extremes appear,
 And flash'd upon the soul with equal force.
 Thus, at half ebb, a rolling sea
 Returns, and wins upon the shore ;
 The wat'ry herd, affrighted at the roar,
 Rest on their fins a while, and stay,
 Then backward take their wond'ring way :
 The prophet wonders more than they,
 At prodigies but rarely seen before, [fway.
 And cries a king must fall, or kingdoms change their
 Such were our counter-tides at land, and so
 Prefaging of the fatal blow,
 In their prodigious ebb and flow.
 The royal soul, that, like the lab'ring moon,
 By charms of art was hurried down,
 Forc'd with regret to leave her native sphere,
 Came but a while on liking here ;
 Soon weary of the painful strife,
 And made but faint essays of life :

* * An eagle is a tide swelling above another tide,
 which I have myself observ'd on the river Trent.

An evening light,
 Soon shut in night;
 A strong distemper, and a weak relief;
 Short intervals of joy, and long returns of grief.

V.

The sons of art all med'cines try'd,
 And every noble remedy apply'd;
 With emulation each essay'd
 His utmost skill; nay more, they pray'd:
 Was never losing game with better conduct play'd;
 Death never won a stake with greater toil,
 Nor e'er was Fate so near a foil:
 But, like a fortress on a rock,
 Th' impregnable disease their vain attempts did mock:
 They min'd it near; they batter'd from afar
 With all the cannon of th' med'cinal war:
 No gentle means could be essay'd;
 'Twas beyond parley when the siege was laid:
 Th' extremest ways they first ordain,
 Prescribing such intolerable pain,
 As none but Caesar could sustain:
 Undaunted Caesar underwent
 The malice of their art, nor bent,
 Beneath whate'er their pious rigour could invent.
 In five such days he suffer'd more
 Than any suffer'd in his reign before:
 More, infinitely more, than he
 Against the worst of rebels cou'd decree,
 A traitor, or twice-pardon'd enemy.
 Now art was tir'd without success;
 No racks could make the stubborn malady confess.
 The vain insurancers of life,

And they who most perform'd and promis'd less,
Ev'n Short and Hobbes forsook th' unequal strife.

Death and despair was in their looks;
No longer they consult their memories or books:
Like helpless friends, who view from shore
The labouring ship, and hear the tempest roar,
So stood they with their arms across,
Not to assist, but to deplore
'Th' inevitable loss.

VI.

Death was denounc'd; that frightful sound,
Which e'en the best can hardly bear:
He took the summons void of fear,
And, unconcern'dly, cast his eyes around;
As if to find and dare the grieved challenger.
What Death cou'd do he lately try'd,
When in four days he more than dy'd.
The same assurance all his words did grace;
The same majestic mildness held its place;
Nor lost the monarch in his dying face.
Intrepid, pious, merciful, and brave,
He look'd as when he conquer'd and forgave.

VII.

As if some angel had been sent
To lengthen out his government,
And to foretel as many years again,
As he had number'd in his happy reign;
So chearfully he took the doom
Of his departing breath;
Nor shrunk, nor step'd aside for Death;
But, with unalter'd path, kept on,
Providing for events to come.

When he resign'd the throne,
 Still he maintain'd his kingly state,
 And grew familiar with his fate :
 Kind, good, and gracious to the last,
 On all he lov'd before his dying beams he cast.
 Oh truly good and truly great,
 For glorious as he rose, benignly so he set!
 All that on earth he held most dear,
 He recommended to his care,
 To whom both heav'n
 The right had giv'n,
 And his own love bequeath'd supreme command :
 He took and press'd that ever loyal hand,
 Which cou'd in peace secure his reign,
 Which cou'd in wars his pow'r maintain ;
 That hand, on which no plighted vows were ever vain.
 Well, for so great a trust, he chose
 A prince who never disobey'd,
 Not when the most severe commands were laid ;
 Nor want nor exile with his duty weigh'd :
 A prince, on whom, if heav'n its eyes cou'd close,
 The welfare of the world it safely might repose.

VIII.

That king, who liv'd to God's own heart,
 Yet less serenely died than he :
 Charles left behind no harsh decree,
 For schoolmen with laborious art
 To salve from cruelty :
 Those, for whom love could no excuses frame,
 He graciously forgot to name.
 Thus far my Muse, though rudely, has design'd
 Some faint resemblance of his god-like mind :

But neither pen nor pencil can express
 The parting brother's tenderness:
 Though that's a term too mean and low;
 (The blest'd above a kinder word may know:)
 But what they did, and what they said,
 The monarch who triumphant went,
 The militant who staid,
 Like painters, when their heightning arts are spent,
 I cast into a shade.
 That all-forgiving king,
 The type of him above,
 That inexhausted spring
 Of clemency and love,
 Himself to his next self accus'd,
 And ask'd that pardon, which he ne'er refus'd,
 For faults not his, for guilt and crimes
 Of godless men, and of rebellious times;
 For an hard exile, kindly meant,
 When his ungrateful country sent
 Their best Camillus into banishment;
 And forc'd their sov'reign's act, they cou'd not his
 consent.
 Oh how much rather had that injur'd chief
 Repeated all his suff'rings past,
 Than hear a pardon begg'd at last,
 Which given cou'd give the dying no relief!
 He bent, he sunk beneath his grief;
 His dauntless heart wou'd fain have held
 From weeping, but his eyes rebell'd:
 Perhaps the god-like hero in his breast
 Disdain'd, or was asham'd to show
 So weak, so womanish a woe,

Which yet the brother and the friend so plenteously
confess'd.

IX.

Amidst that silent show'r, the royal mind
An easy passage found,
And left its sacred earth behind;
Nor murm'ring groan express'd, nor lab'ring sound,
Nor any least tumultuous breath;
Calm was his life, and quiet was his death;
Soft as those gentle whispers were,
In which th' Almighty did appear;
By the still sound the prophet knew him there.
That peace, which made thy prosp'rous reign to shine;
That peace, thou leav'st to thy imperial line,
That peace, Oh happy shade, be ever thine!

X.

For all those joys thy restoration brought,
For all the miracles it wrought,
For all the healing balm thy mercy pour'd
Into the nation's bleeding wound,
And care that after kept it sound;
For numerous blessings yearly shower'd,
And property with plenty crown'd;
For freedom still maintain'd alive,
Freedom, which in no other land will thrive,
Freedom, an English subject's sole prerogative,
Without whose charms, e'en peace would be
But a dull quiet slavery:
For these, and more, accept our pious praise;
'Tis all the subsidy
The present age can raise;
The rest is charg'd on late posterity:

Posterity is charg'd the more,
 Because the large abounding store,
 To them and to their heirs, is still entail'd by thee :
 Succession, of a long descent,
 Which chasteley in the channels ran,
 And from our demi-gods began,
 Equal almost to time in its extent :
 Through hazards numberless and great,
 Thou hast deriv'd this mighty blessing down,
 And fix'd the fairest gem that decks th' imperial crown.
 Not faction, when it shook thy regal seat,
 Not senates, insolently loud,
 (Those echoes of a thoughtless crowd)
 Not foreign or domestic treachery,
 Could warp thy soul to their unjust decree.
 So much thy foes thy manly mind mistook,
 Who judg'd it by the mildness of thy look ;
 Like a well-temper'd sword it bent at will,
 But kept the native toughness of the steel,

XI.

Be true, O Clio, to thy hero's name ;
 But draw him strictly so,
 That all, who view the piece, may know
 He needs no trappings of fictitious fame :
 The load's too weighty ; thou may'st chuse
 Some parts of praise, and some refuse :
 Write, that his annals may be thought more lavish
 than the Muse.
 In scanty truth thou hast confin'd
 The virtues of a royal mind,
 Forgiving, bounteous, humble, just, and kind :

His conversation, wit, and parts,
 His knowledge in the noblest, useful arts,
 Were such, dead authors could not give;
 But habitudes of those who live;
 Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive:
 He drain'd from all, and all they knew;
 His apprehension quick, his judgment true;
 That the most learn'd, with shame, confess
 His knowledge more, his reading only less.

XII.

Amidst the peaceful triumphs of his reign,
 What wonder if the kindly beams he shed
 Reviv'd the drooping arts again,
 If Science rais'd her head,
 And soft Humanity, that from Rebellion fled?
 Our isle indeed, too fruitful was before;
 But all uncultivated lay
 Out of the solar walk and heaven's high way;
 With rank Geneva weeds run o'er,
 And cockle, at the best, amidst the corn it bore:
 The royal husbandman appear'd,
 And plough'd, and sow'd, and till'd;
 The thorns he rooted out, the rubbish clear'd,
 And blest th' obedient field;
 When, straight, a double harvest rose;
 Such as the swarthy Indian mows;
 Or happier climates near the line,
 Or Paradise manur'd and dress'd by hands divine.

XIII.

As when the new-born phoenix takes his way,
 His rich paternal regions to survey,

Of airy choristers a numerous train
 Attend his wondrous progress o'er the plain ;
 So, rising from his father's urn,
 So glorious did our Charles return.
 Th' officious Muses came along,
 A gay harmonious choir of angels ever young :
 The Muse that mourns him now his happy triumph
 sung.

Even they could thrive in his auspicious reign ;
 And such a plenteous crop they bore
 Of purest and well-winnowed grain,
 As Britain never knew before.
 Tho' little was their hire, and light their gain,
 Yet somewhat to their share he threw :
 Fed from his hand, they sung and flew,
 Like birds of Paradise, that liv'd on morning dew.
 Oh never let their lays his name forget !
 The pension of a prince's praise is great.
 Live then, thou great encourager of arts,
 Live ever in our thankful hearts ;
 Live blest above, almost invok'd below ;
 Live, and receive this pious vow,
 Our patron once, our guardian angel now.
 Thou Fabius of a sinking state,
 Who didst, by wise delays, divert our fate ;
 When faction like a tempest rose,
 In death's most hideous form,
 Then art to rage thou didst oppose,
 To weather out the storm :
 Not quitting thy supreme command,
 Thou heldst the rudder with a steady hand,
 'Till safely on the shore the bark did land :

The bark, that all our blessings brought,
Charg'd with thyself and James, a doubly royal fraught.

XIV.

Oh frail estate of human things,
And slippery hopes below!
Now to our cost your emptiness we know;
(For 'tis a lesson dearly bought)
Assurance here is never to be fought.
The best, and best lov'd of kings,
And best deserving to be so,
When scarce he had escap'd the fatal blow
Of faction and conspiracy,
Death did his promis'd hopes destroy:
He toil'd, he gain'd, but liv'd not to enjoy.
What mists of Providence are these,
Through which we cannot see!
So saints, by supernatural pow'r set free,
Are left at last in martyrdom to die;
Such is the end of oft repeated miracles.
Forgive me, Heav'n, that impious thought,
'Twas grief for Charles, to madness wrought,
That question'd thy supreme decree!
Thou didst his gracious reign prolong,
Even in thy saints and angels wrong,
His fellow-citizens of immortality;
For twelve long years of exile born,
'Twice twelve we number'd since his blest return:
So strictly wert thou just to pay,
Even to the driblet of a day.
Yet still we murmur, and complain
The quails and manna should no longer rain:

Those miracles 'twas needless to renew ;
The chosen flock has now the promis'd land in view.

XV.

A warlike prince ascends the regal state,
A prince, long exercis'd by fate :
Long may he keep, tho' he obtains it late !
Heroes in heaven's peculiar mold are cast ;
They, and their poets, are not form'd in haste :
Man was the first in God's design, and man was made
the last.

False heroes, made by flattery so,
Heav'n can strike out, like sparkles, at a blow ;
But, ere a prince is to perfection brought,
He costs Omnipotence a second thought.

With toil and sweat,
With hardning cold, and forming heat,
The Cyclops did their strokes repeat,
Before th' impenetrable shield was wrought.
It looks as if the Maker would not own
The noble work for his,
Before 'twas try'd and found a master-piece.

XVI.

View then a monarch ripen'd for a throne.
Alcides thus his race began,
O'er infancy he swiftly ran ;
The future god, at first, was more than man :
Dangers and toils, and Juno's hate,
Even o'er his cradle lay in wait,
And there he grapled first with fate :
In his young hands the hissing snakes he prest ;
So early was the deity confest :

Thus, by degrees, he rose to Jove's imperial seat;
Thus difficulties prove a soul legitimately great.

Like his, our hero's infancy was try'd;
Betimes the Furies did their snakes provide;
And to his infant arms oppose
His father's rebels, and his brother's foes;
The more oppress'd, the higher still he rose:
Those were the preludes of his fate,
That form'd his manhood, to subdue
The Hydra of the many-headed, hissing crew.

XVII.

As after Numa's peaceful reign,
The martial Ancus did the scepter wield,
Furbish'd the rusty sword again,
Resum'd the long-forgotten shield,
And led the Latins to the dusty field:
So James the drowsy Genius wakes
Of Britain, long entranc'd in charms,
Restiff, and slumb'ring on its arms:
'Tis rous'd, and with a new strong nerve the spear al-
ready shakes.
No neighing of the warrior steeds,
No drum, or louder trumpet, needs
T' inspire the coward, warm the cold;
His voice, his sole appearance, makes them bold.
Gaul and Batavia dread th' impending blow;
Too well the vigour of that arm they know;
They lick the dust, and crouch beneath their fatal foe.
Long may they fear this awful prince,
And not provoke his lingring sword;
Peace is their only sure defence,
Their best security his word.

In all the changes of his doubtful state,
 His truth, like Heaven's, was kept inviolate:
 For him to promise, is to make it fate.
 His valour can triumph o'er land and main:
 With broken oaths his fame he will not stain,
 With conquest basely bought, and with inglorious
 gain.

XVIII.

For once, O heav'n, unfold thy adamantine book;
 And let his wond'ring senate see,
 If not thy firm immutable decree,
 At least the second page of great contingency;
 Such as consists with wills originally free:
 Let them with glad amazement look
 On what their happiness may be:
 Let them not still be obstinately blind,
 Still to divert the good thou hast design'd,
 Or with malignant penury
 To starve the royal virtues of his mind.
 Faith is a Christian's, and a subject's test;
 Oh give them to believe, and they are surely blest!
 They do; and, with a distant view, I see
 'Th' amended vows of English loyalty:
 And all beyond that object there appears
 The long retinue of a prosperous reign,
 A series of successful years,
 In orderly array, a martial, manly train.
 Behold e'en to remoter shores
 A conquering navy proudly spread;
 The British cannon formidably roars,
 While, starting from his oozy bed,
 Th' asserted Ocean rears his reverend head,

To view and recognize his ancient lord again :
 And, with a willing hand, restores
 The fasces of the main.

BRITANNIA REDIVIVA:

A POEM on the PRINCE, born on the 10th

June 1688.

OUR vows are heard by times, and heav'n takes care
 To grant, before we can conclude the pray'r :
 Preventing angels met it half the way,
 And sent us back to praise, who came to pray.

Just on the day, when the high-mounted sun
 Did farthest in its northern progress run,
 He bended forward, and ev'n stretch'd the sphere
 Beyond the limits of the lengthen'd year,
 To view a brighter sun in Britain born;
 That was the business of his longest morn;
 The glorious object seen, 'twas time to turn.

Departing spring could only stay to shed
 Her gloomy beauties on the genial bed,
 But left the manly summer in her stead,
 With timely fruit the longing land to chear,
 And to fulfil the promise of the year.
 Betwixt two seasons comes th' auspicious heir,
 This age to blossom, and the next to bear.

* Last solemn Sabbath saw the church attend,
 The Paracet in fiery pomp descend;
 But when his wond'rous † octave roll'd again,
 He brought a royal infant in his train.
 So great a blessing to so good a king
 None but th' eternal Comforter could bring.

Or did the mighty Trinity conspire,
 As once in council to create our fire?
 It seems as if they sent the new-born guest
 To wait on the procession of their feast;
 And on their sacred anniverse decreed
 To stamp their image on the promis'd seed.
 Three realms united, and on one bestow'd,
 An emblem of their mystic union show'd:
 The mighty Trine the triple empire shar'd,
 As every person would have one to guard.

Hail son of pray'rs! by holy violence
 Drawn down from heav'n; but long be banish'd thence,
 And late to thy paternal skies retire:
 To mend our crimes whole ages would require;
 To change th' inveterate habit of our sins,
 And finish what thy godlike fire begins.
 Kind heav'n, to make us Englishmen again,
 No less can give us than a patriarch's reign.

The sacred cradle to your charge receive,
 Ye seraphs, and by turns the guard relieve;
 Thy father's angel, and thy father join
 To keep possession, and secure the line;

* Whit-Sunday.

† Trinity-Sunday.

But long defer the honours of thy fate :
 Great may they be like his, like his be late ;
 That James his running century may view,
 And give this son an auspice to the new.

Our wants exact at least that moderate stay :
 For see * the dragon winged on his way,
 To watch the † travel, and devour the prey.
 Or, if allusions may not rise so high,
 Thus, when Alcides rais'd his infant-cry,
 The snakes besieg'd his young divinity :
 But vainly with their forked tongues they threat ;
 For opposition makes a hero great.
 To needful succour all the good will run,
 And Jove assert the godhead of his son.

O still repining at your present state,
 Grudging yourselves the benefits of fate,
 Look up, and read in characters of light
 A blessing sent you in your own despight.
 The manna falls, yet that celestial bread
 Like Jews you munch, and murmur while you feed.
 May not your fortune be like theirs, exil'd,
 Yet forty years to wander in the wild :
 Or if it be, may Moses live at least,
 To lead you to the verge of promis'd rest.

Tho' poets are not prophets, to foreknow
 What plants will take the blight, and what will grow ;
 By tracing heav'n his footsteps may be found :
 Behold ! how awfully he walks the round !

* Alluding only to the common-wealth party,
 here and in other places of the poem.

† Rev. xii. 4.

God is abroad, and, wond'rous in his ways,
 The rise of empires and their fall surveys:
 More (might I say) than with an usual eye,
 He sees his bleeding church in ruin ly,
 And hears the souls of saints beneath his altar cry.
 Already has he lifted high the * sign,
 Which crown'd the conquering arms of Constantine:
 The † moon grows pale at that presaging sight,
 And half her train of stars have lost their light.

Behold another ‡ Sylvester, to bless
 The sacred standard, and secure success;
 Large of his treasures, of a soul so great,
 As fills and crowds his universal seat.

Now view at home a § second Constantine;
 (The former too was of the British line)
 Has not his healing balm your breaches clos'd,
 Whose exile many sought, and few oppos'd?
 O, did not Heav'n by its eternal doom
 Permit those evils that this good might come?
 So manifest, that e'en the moon-ey'd sects
 See *whom* and *what* this providence protects.
 Methinks, had we within our minds no more
 Than that one shipwreck on the fatal ¶ ore,
 'That only thought may make us think again,
 What wonders God reserves for such a reign.

* The cross.

† The crescents, which the Turks bear for their
 arms.

‡ The Pope in the time of Constantine the Great,
 alluding to the present Pope.

§ King James the second.

¶ The Lemmon ore.

To dream that chance his preservation wrought,
 Were to think Noah was preserv'd for nought ;
 Or the surviving eight were not design'd
 To people earth, and to restore their kind.

When humbly on the royal babe we gaze,
 The manly lines of a majestic face
 Give awful joy : 'Tis paradise to look
 On the fair frontispiece of Nature's book :
 If the first opening page so charms the sight,
 'Think how th' unfolded volume will delight !
 See how the venerable infant lies
 In early pomp ; how through the mother's eyes
 The father's soul, with an undaunted view,
 Looks out, and takes our homage as his due.
 See on his future subjects how he smiles,
 Nor meanly flatters, nor with craft beguiles ;
 But with an open face, as on his throne,
 Assures our birthrights, and assumes his own.
 Born in broad day-light, that th' ungrateful rout
 May find no room for a remaining doubt ;
 Truth, which itself is light, does darkness shun,
 And the true eaglet safely dares the sun.

‡ Fain would the fiends have made a dubious birth,
 Loth to confess the Godhead cloath'd in earth :
 But sicken'd after all their baffled lies,
 To find an heir apparent in the skies :
 Abandon'd to despair, still may they grudge,
 And, owning not the Saviour, prove the Judge.

Not great * Æneas stood in plainer day,

‡ Alluding to the temptations in the wilderness.

* Virg. Æneid. I.

When, the dark mantling mist dissolv'd away,
 He to the Tyrians shew'd his sudden face,
 Shining with all his goddess's mother's grace:
 For she herself had made his count'nance bright,
 Breath'd honour on his eyes, and her own purple light.

If our victorious † Edward, as they say,
 Gave Wales a prince on that propitious day,
 Why may not years, revolving with his fate,
 Produce his like, but with a longer date?
 One, who may carry to a distant shore
 The terror that his fam'd forefather bore.
 But why should James or his young hero stay
 For slight presages of a name or day?
 We need no Edward's fortune to adorn
 That moment when our prince was born:
 Our prince adorns this day, and ages hence
 Shall wish his birth-day for some future prince.

Great Michael, prince of all th' etherial hosts,
 And whate'er inborn saints our Britain boasts;
 And thou, th' adopted patron * of our isle,
 With chearful aspects on this infant smile:
 The pledge of heav'n, which, dropping from above,
 Secures our bliss, and reconciles his love.

Enough of ills our dire rebellion wrought,
 When, to the dregs, we drank the bitter draught;
 Then airy atoms did in plagues conspire,
 Nor did th' avenging angel yet retire,
 But purg'd our still-increasing crimes with fire.

† Edward the Black Prince, born on Trinity Sunday.

* St George.

Then perjur'd plots, the still impending test,
 And worse----but charity conceals the rest:
 Here stop the current of the sanguine flood;
 Require not, gracious God, thy martyr's blood;
 But let their dying pangs, their living toil,
 Spread a rich harvest through their native soil:
 A harvest ripening for another reign,
 Of which this royal babe may reap the grain.

Enough of early faints one womb has giv'n;
 Enough increas'd the family of heav'n:
 Let them for his, and our atonement go;
 And reigning blest'd above, leave him to rule below.

Enough already has the year foreshow'd
 His wonted course, the sea has overflow'd,
 The meads were floated with a weeping spring,
 And frighten'd birds in woods forgot to sing:
 The strong-limb'd steed beneath his harness faints,
 And the same shiv'ring sweat his lord attaints.
 When will the minister of wrath give o'er?
 Beholding him at † Arauna's threshing-floor;
 He stops, and seems to sheathe his flaming brand,
 Pleas'd with burnt incense from our David's hand.
 David has bought the Jebusite's abode,
 And rais'd an altar to the living God.

Heav'n, to reward him, make his joys sincere;
 No future ills, nor accidents appear,
 To fully and pollute the sacred infant's year.
 Five months to discord and debate were giv'n:
 He sanctifies the yet remaining seven.

† Alluding to the passage in the first book of Kings,
 chap. xxiv.

Sabbath of months! henceforth in him be blest'd,
And prelude to the realms perpetual rest!

Let his baptismal drops for us atone;
Lustrations for * offences not his own.
Let conscience, which is int'rest ill disguis'd,
In the same font be cleans'd, and all the land baptiz'd.

† Unnam'd as yet; at least unknown to fame;
Is there a strife in heav'n about his name;
Where every famous predecessor vies,
And makes a faction for it in the skies?
Or must it be reserv'd to thought alone?
Such was the sacred ‡ Tetragrammaton.
Things worthy silence must not be reveal'd:
Thus the true name of § Rome was kept conceal'd,
To shun the spells and forceries of those
Who durst her infant majesty oppose.
But when his tender strength in time shall rise
To dare ill tongues and fascinating eyes;
This isle, which hides the little thunderer's fame,
Shall be too narrow to contain his name:
Th' artillery of heav'n shall make him known;
† Crete could not hold the god, when Jove was grown.

* Original sin.

† The prince christen'd, but not nam'd.

‡ Jehovah, or the name of God, unlawful to be pronounced by the Jews.

§ Some authors say, that the true name of Rome was kept a secret, "ne hostes incantamentis deos elicerent."

† Candia, where Jupiter was born and bred secretly.

As Jove's † increase, who from his brain was born,
 Whom arms and arts did equally adorn,
 Free of the breast was bred, whose milky taste,
 Minerva's name to Venus had debas'd;
 So this imperial babe rejects the food
 That mixes monarchs with plebeian blood:
 Food that his inborn courage might controul,
 Extinguish all the father in his soul,
 And, for his Estian race, and Saxon strain,
 Might re-produce some second Richard's reign.
 Mildness he shares from both his parent's blood:
 But kings too tame are despicably good:
 Be this the mixture of this regal child,
 By nature manly, but by virtue mild.

Thus far the furious transport of the news
 Had to prophetic madness fir'd the Muse;
 Madness ungovernable, uninspir'd,
 Swift to foretel whatever she desir'd.
 Was it for me the dark abyss to tread,
 And read the book which angels cannot read?
 How was I punish'd when the sudden * blast,
 The face of heav'n and our young sun o'ercast!
 Fame, the swift ill, increasing as she roll'd,
 Disease, Despair, and Death, at three reprises told:
 At three insulting strides she stalk'd the town,
 And, like contagion, struck the loyal down.
 Down fell the winnow'd wheat; but mounted high,
 The whirlwind bore the chaff, and hid the sky.

† Pallas or Minerva; said by the poets to have been bred up by hand.

* The sudden false report of the prince's death.

Here black Rebellion shooting from below
 (As earth's * gigantic brood by moments grow)
 And here the sons of God are petrified with woe:
 An apoplex of grief! so low were driv'n
 The saints, as hardly to defend their heav'n.

As, when pent vapours run their hollow round,
 Earthquakes, which are convulsions of the ground,
 Break bellowing forth, and no confinement brook,
 Till the third settles what the former shook;
 Such heavings had our souls; till, slow and late,
 Our life with his return'd, and faith prevail'd on fate.
 By prayers the mighty blessing was implor'd,
 To pray'rs was granted, and by pray'rs restor'd.

So, ere the † Shunamite a son conceiv'd,
 The prophet promis'd, and the wife believ'd.
 A son was sent, the son so much desir'd;
 But soon upon the mother's knees expir'd.
 The troubled seer approach'd the mournful door,
 Ran, pray'd, and sent his past'ral staff before,
 Then stretch'd his limbs upon the child and mourn'd,
 Till warmth, and breath, and a new soul return'd.

Thus Mercy stretches out her hand, and saves
 Desponding Peter sinking in the waves.

As when a sudden storm of hail and rain
 Beats to the ground the yet unbearded grain,
 'Think not the hopes of harvest are destroy'd
 On the flat field, and on the naked void:

* Those giants are feigned to have grown fifteen ell's
 every day.

† In the second book of Kings, chap. iv.

The light, unloaded stem from tempest freed,
 Will raise the youthful honours of his head;
 And, soon restor'd by native vigour, bear
 The timely product of the bounteous year.

Nor yet conclude all fiery trials past:
 For heav'n will exercise us to the last;
 Sometimes will check us in our full career,
 With doubtful blessings, and with mingled fear;
 That, still depending on his daily grace,
 His every mercy for an alms may pass,
 With sparing hands will diet us to good;
 Preventing surfeits of our pamper'd blood.
 So feeds the mother-bird her craving young
 With little morsels, and delays 'em long.

True, this last blessing was a royal feast;
 But, where's the wedding garment on the guest?
 Our manners, as religion, were a dream,
 Are such as teach the nations to blaspheme.
 In lusts we wallow, and with pride we swell,
 And injuries with injuries repel;
 Prompt to revenge, not daring to forgive,
 Our lives unteach the doctrine we believe.
 Thus Israel sinn'd, impenitently hard,
 And vainly thought the * present ark their guard;
 But when the haughty Philistines appear,
 They fled, abandon'd to their foes and fear;
 Their God was absent, tho' his ark was there.
 Ah! lest our crimes should snatch this pledge away,
 And make our joys the blessings of a day!

* 1 Sam. iv. 10.

For we have sinn'd him hence, and that he lives,
 God to his promise, not our practice gives.
 Our crimes wou'd soon weigh down the guilty scale,
 But James, and Mary, and the church prevail.
 Nor * Amalek can rout the *chosen bands*,
 While Hur and Aaron hold up Moses hands.

By living well, let us secure his days,
 Mod'rate in hopes, and humble in our ways.
 No force the free-born spirit can constrain,
 But charity, and great examples gain.
 Forgiveness is our thanks for such a day;
 'Tis god-like God in his own coin to pay.
 But you, propitious Queen, translated here,
 From your mild heav'n, to rule our rugged sphere
 Beyond the funny walks and circling year;
 You, who your native climate have bereft
 Of all the virtues, and the vices left;
 Whom piety and beauty make their boast,
 Though beautiful is well in pious lost;
 So lost as star-light is dissolv'd away,
 And melts into the brightness of the day;
 Or gold about the regal diadem,
 Lost to improve the lustre of the gem.
 What can we add to your triumphant day?
 Let the great gift the beauteous giver pay.
 For shou'd our thanks awake the rising sun,
 And lengthen, as his latest shadows run, [done.
 That, tho' the longest day, wou'd soon, too soon be
 Let angels voices with their harps conspire,
 But keep th' auspicious infant from the choir;

* Exod. xvii. 8.

Late let him sing above, and let us know
No sweeter music, than his cries below.

Nor can I wish to you, great Monarch, more
Than such an annual income to your store;
The day, which gave this *Unit*, did not shine
For a less omen, than to fill the *Trine*.

After a *Prince*, an *Admiral* beget;
The *Royal Sov'reign* wants an anchor yet.

Our isle has younger titles still in store,
And when th' exhausted land can yield no more,
Your line can force them from a foreign shore.

The name of Great your martial mind will suit;
But justice is your darling attribute:
Of all the Greeks, 'twas but * one hero's due,
And, in him, Plutarch prophesy'd of you,
A prince's favours but on few can fall,
But justice is a virtue shar'd by all.

Some kings the name of conqu'rors have assum'd,
Some to be great, some to be gods presum'd;
But boundless pow'r, and arbitrary lust,
Made tyrants still abhor the name of Just;
They shunn'd the praise this god-like virtue gives,
And fear'd a title, that reproach'd their lives.

The pow'r, from which all kings derive their state,
Whom they pretend, at least, to imitate,
Is equal both to punish and reward;
For few wou'd love their God, unless they fear'd.

Resistless force and immortality
Make but a lame, imperfect, deity:

* Aristides. See his life in Plutarch.

Tempests have force unbounded to destroy,
 And deathless being e'en the damn'd enjoy;
 And yet Heaven's attributes, both last and first,
 One without life, and one with life accurst:
 But justice is Heaven's self, so strictly he,
 That cou'd it fail, the Godhead cou'd not be.
 This virtue is your own; but life and state
 Are one to fortune subject, one to fate:
 Equal to all, you justly frown or smile;
 Nor hopes, nor fears your steady hand beguile;
 Yourself our balance hold, the world's our isle.

SATYR upon the DUTCH,

Written in the Year 1662.

AS needy gallants, in the scriv'ner's hands,
 Court the rich knaves that gripe their mortgag'd
 lands;
 The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
 And keeper takes no fee in compliment;
 The dotage of some Englishmen is such,
 To fawn on those, who ruin them, the Dutch.
 They shall have all, rather than make a war
 With those, who of the same religion are.
 The Straits, the Guinea-trade, the herrings too;
 Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle you.
 Some are resolv'd not to find out the cheat,
 But cuckold-like, love them that do the feat.

What injuries foe'er upon us fall,
Yet still the same religion answers all.
Religion wheedl'd us to civil war,
Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now wou'd spare.
Be gull'd no longer ; for you'll find it true,
'They have no more religion, faith ! than you.
Int'rest's the god they worship in their state,
And we, I take it, have not much of that.
Well monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.
They share a sin ; and such proportions fall,
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.
Think on their rapine, falshood, cruelty,
And that what once they were, they still wou'd be.
To one well-born th' affront is worse and more,
When he's abus'd and baffl'd by a boor.
With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do ;
'They've both ill nature and ill manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation ;
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion :
And their new commonwealth has set them free
Only from honour and civility.
Venetians do not more uncouthly ride,
Than did their lubber state mankind bestride.
Their sway became 'em with as ill a mien,
As their own paunches swell above their chin.
Yet is their empire no true growth but humour,
And only two kings touch can cure the tumour.
As Cato did in Afric fruits display ;
Let us before our eyes their Indies lay :
All loyal English will like him conclude ;
Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdu'd.

A B S A L O M

AND

A C H I T O P H E L.

A

P O E M.

-----*Si propius stes,
Te capiet magis*-----

HOR.

THE HISTORY OF

THE REIGN OF

ABSLAM

AND

ACHITOPHEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

JOHN

WILKINS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

LONDON:

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T O T H E
R E A D E R.

TIS not my intention to make an apology for my Poem: Some will think it needs no excuse, and others will receive none. The design, I am sure, is honest; but he, who draws his pen for one party, must expect to make enemies of the other. For Wit and Fool are consequents of Whig and Tory; and every man is a knave or an ass to the contrary side. There is a treasury of merits in the Fanatic Church, as well as in the Popish; and a pennyworth to be had of faintship, honesty, and poetry, for the lewd, the factious, and the blockheads: But the longest chapter in Deuteronomy has not curses enough for an Anti-Bromingham. My comfort is, their manifest prejudice to my cause will render their judgment of less authority against me. Yet if a poem have a genius, it will force its own reception in the world. For there's a sweetness in good verse, which tickles even while it hurts: And no man can be heartily angry with him, who pleases him against his will. The commendation of adversaries is the greatest triumph of a writer, because it never comes unless extorted. But I can be satisfied on more easy terms: If I happen to please the more moderate sort, I shall be sure of an honest party, and, in all probability, of the best judges: For the least

concern'd are commonly the least corrupt. And I confess I have laid in for those, by rebating the satire (where justice would allow it) from carrying too sharp an edge. They, who can criticise so weakly, as to imagine I have done my worst, may be convinced at their own cost, that I can write severely, with more ease than I can gently. I have but laugh'd at some mens follies, when I could have declaim'd against their vices: and other mens virtues I have commended, as freely as I have tax'd their crimes. And now, if you are a malicious reader, I expect you should return upon me, that I affect to be thought more impartial than I am. But if men are not to be judged by their professions, God forgive you commonwealth's-men for professing so plausibly for the government. You cannot be so unconscionable as to charge me for not subscribing of my name; for that would reflect too grossly upon your own party, who never dare, though they have the advantage of a jury to secure them. If you like not my poem, the fault may possibly be in my writing; though 'tis hard for an authour to judge against himself. But more probably 'tis in your morals, which cannot bear the truth of it. The violent, on both sides, will condemn the character of Absalom, as either too favourably, or too hardly drawn. But they are not the violent, whom I desire to please. The fault, on the right hand, is to extenuate, palliate, and indulge; and, to confess freely, I have endeavoured to commit it. Besides the respect which I owe his birth, I have a greater for his heroic virtues; and David himself could not be more tender of the young man's life, than I would be of his reputation. But since the most excellent natures are always

the most easy, and, as being such, are the soonest perverted by ill counsels, especially when baited with fame and glory; 'tis no more a wonder that he withstood not the temptations of Achitophel, than it was for Adam not to have resisted the two devils, the serpent and the woman. The conclusion of the story I purposely forebore to prosecute, because I could not obtain from myself, to shew Absalom unfortunate. The frame of it was cut out but for a picture to the waste; and if the draught be so far true, 'tis as much as I designed.

Were I the inventor, who am only the historian, I should certainly conclude the piece, with the reconciliation of Absalom to David. And who knows but this may come to pass? Things were not brought to an extremity where I left the story; there seems, yet, to be room left for a composition; hereafter there may be only for pity. I have not so much as an uncharitable wish against Achitophel, but am content to be accused of a good-natur'd error, and to hope with Origen, that the devil himself may at last be saved. For which reason, in this Poem, he is neither brought to set his house in order, nor to dispose of his person afterwards as he in wisdom shall think fit. God is infinitely merciful; and his vice-gerent is only not so, because he is not infinite.

The true end of Satire is the amendment of vices by correction. And he, who writes honestly, is no more an enemy to the offender, than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease; for those are only in order to prevent

the surgeon's work of an *Ense rescindendum*, which I wish not to my very enemies. To conclude all: If the body politic have any analogy to the natural, in my weak judgment, an act of oblivion were as necessary in a hot distemper'd state, as an opiate would be in a raging fever.

A KEY TO

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

Abethdin,	<i>Lord Chancellor.</i>
ABSALOM,	<i>DUKE of MONMOUTH,</i>
ACHITOPHEL,	<i>Lord SHAFTSBURY.</i>
Adriel,	<i>Earl of Mulgrave.</i>
Agag,	<i>Sir Edmondbury Godfrey.</i>
Amiel,	<i>Mr Seymour, Speaker.</i>
Annabel,	<i>Duchess of Monmouth.</i>
Balaam,	<i>Earl of Huntington.</i>
Balaak,	<i>Barnet.</i>
Barzillai,	<i>Duke of Ormond.</i>
Bathsheba,	<i>Duchess of Portsmouth.</i>
Benaiah,	<i>General Sackville.</i>
Bezaiel,	<i>Duke of Beaufort.</i>
Caleb,	<i>Lord Grey.</i>
Corah,	<i>Dr Oates.</i>
David,	<i>King CHARLES II.</i>
Doeg,	<i>Settle.</i>
EGYPT,	<i>FRANCE.</i>
<i>Ethnic Plot,</i>	<i>Popish Plot.</i>
HEBRON,	<i>SCOTLAND.</i>
Hebrew Priests,	<i>English Clergy.</i>
Hushai,	<i>Hyde, Earl of Rochester.</i>
<i>Jebusites,</i>	<i>Papists.</i>

JERUSALEM,

Ben. Jochanan,

Jonas,

Jotham,

Ishbosheth,

ISRAEL,

Iffachar,

Judas,

Mephibosheth,

MICHAEL,

Nadab,

Og,

Phaleg,

PHARAOH,

Sagan of Jerusalem,

Sanhedrim,

SAUL,

Shimei,

Solymean Rout,

TYRE,

UZZA,

Zadoc,

Zimri,

LONDON.

Johnson.

Sir W. Jones.

Marquis of Halifax.

Richard Cromwell.

ENGLAND.

T. Thynne, *Esq.*

Ferguson.

Pordage.

Q. CATHARINE.

Lord Howard of Efrick.

Shadwell.

Forbes.

KING of FRANCE.

Bishop of London.

Parliament.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

Sheriff Bethel.

London Rebels.

HOLLAND.

J. H.

Archbishop Sancroft.

Duke of Buckingham.

MAC FLECKNOE.

ALL human things are subject to decay,
 And, when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
 This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
 Was call'd to empire, and had govern'd long;
 In prose and verse, was own'd, without dispute,
 Through all the realms of *nonsense*, absolute.
 This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
 And blest with issue of a large increase;
 Worn out with business, did at length debate
 To settle the succession of the state:
 And, pond'ring, which of all his sons was fit
 To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
 Cry'd, 'Tis resolv'd; for nature pleads, that he
 Should only rule, who most resembles me.
 Sh----- alone my perfect image bears,
 Mature in dulness from his tender years:
 Sh----- alone, of all my sons, is he,
 Who stands confirm'd in full stupidity.
 The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
 But Sh----- never deviates into sense.
 Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
 Strike through, and make a lucid interval;
 But Sh-----'s genuine night admits no ray,
 His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
 Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
 And seems design'd for thoughtless majesty:

Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
'Thou last great prophet of tautology.
Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was sent before but to prepare thy way;
And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
To teach the nations in thy greater name.
My warbling lute, the lute I whilom strung,
When to King John of Portugal I sung,
Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
With well-tim'd oars before the royal barge,
Swell'd with the pride of thy celestial charge:
And big with hymn, commander of an host,
The like was ne'er in Epfom blankets tost.
Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
At thy well-sharpen'd thumb from shore to shore
The trebles squeak for fear, the bases roar:
Echoes from Pissing-Alley Sh---- call,
And Sh---- they resound from Aston-Hall.
About thy boat the little fishes throng,
As at the morning toast, that floats along.
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand.
St Andre's feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own Psyche's rhyme:
Though they in number as in sense excel;
So just, so like tautology, they fell,
That, pale with envy, Singleton forswore
The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore,
And vow'd he ne'er would act Villerius more.

Here stop'd the good old fire, and wept for joy,
In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.

All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
That for anointed dulness he was made.

Close to the walls which fair Augusta bind,
(The fair Augusta much to fears inclin'd)

An antient fabric, rais'd t' inform the sight,
There stood of yore, and Barbican it height:

A watch-tower once; but now, so fate ordains,
Of all the pile an empty name remains:

From its old ruins brothel-houses rise,

Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,

Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,

And, undisturb'd by watch, in silence sleep *.

Near these a nursery erects its head,

Where queens are form'd, and future heroes bred;

Where unfledg'd actors learn to laugh and cry,

Where infant punks their tender voices try †,

And little Maximins the gods defy.

Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,

Nor greater Johnson dares in socks appear;

But gentle Simkin just reception finds,

Amidst this monument of vanish'd minds:

Pure clinches the suburban Muse affords,

And Panton waging harmless war with words.

* Parodies on these lines of Cowley, (Davideis,
Book I.)

Where their vast courts the mother-waters keep,

And, undisturb'd by moons, in silence sleep.

† -----Where unfledg'd tempests lie,

And infant winds their tender voices try.

Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known,
 Ambitiously design'd his Sh-----'s throne.
 For antient Decker grophefy'd long since,
 That in this pile should reign a mighty prince,
 Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense:
 To whom true Dulness should some Pfyches owe,
 But worlds of misers from his pen should flow;
 Humourists and hypocrites it should produce,
 Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.

Now empress Fame had publish'd the renown
 Of Sh-----'s coronation through the town.
 Rous'd by report of fame, the nations meet,
 From near Bunhill, and distant Watling-street.
 No Persian carpets spread th' imperial way,
 But scatter'd limbs of mangled poets lay:
 From dusty shops neglected authors come,
 Martyrs of pies, and reliques of the bum.
 Much Heywood, Shirly, Ogleby there lay,
 But loads of Sh----- almost choak'd the way.
 Bilk'd stationers for yeomen stood prepar'd,
 And H-----n was captain of the guard.
 The hoary prince in majesty appear'd,
 High on a throne of his own labours rear'd.
 At his right hand our young Afcenius fate,
 Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
 His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
 And lambent dulness play'd around his face.
 As Hannibal did to the altars come,
 Swore by his fire a mortal foe to Rome;
 So Sh----- fwore, nor should his vow be vain,
 That he till death true Dulness would maintain;

And, in his father's right, and realm's defence,
 Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
 The king himself the sacred unction made,
 As king by office, and as priest by trade.
 In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
 He plac'd a mighty mug of potent ale;
 Love's kingdom to his right he did convey,
 At once his sceptre, and his rule of sway;
 Whose righteous lore the prince had practis'd young,
 And from whose loins recorded Psyche sprung.
 His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
 That nodding seem'd to consecrate his head.
 Just at the point of time, if fame not ly,
 On his left hand twelve rev'rend owls did fly.
 So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook,
 Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
 Th' admiring throng loud acclamations make,
 And omens of his future empire take.
 The fire then shook the honours of his head,
 And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
 Full on the filial Dulness: Long he stood,
 Repelling from his breast the raging God;
 At length burst out in this prophetic mood.

Heav'ns bless my son, from Ireland let him reign
 To far Barbadoes on the western main;
 Of his dominion may no end be known,
 And greater than his father's be his throne;
 Beyond love's kingdom let him stretch his pen!--
 He paus'd, and all the people cry'd, Amen.
 Then thus continu'd he: My son, advance
 Still in new impudence, new ignorance.

Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
Let Virtuoso's in five years be writ;
Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
Let gentle George in triumph tread the stage,
Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;
Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
And in their folly shew the writers wit.
Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,
And justify their author's want of sense.
Let them be all by thy own model made
Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid;
That they to future ages may be known,
Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
All full of thee, and diff'ring but in name.
But let no alien S---dl---y interpose,
To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.
And when false flowers of rhetoric thou would'st cull,
Trust nature, do not labour to be dull;
But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
Sir Formal's oratory will be thine:
Sir Formal, though unfought, attends thy quill,
And does thy Northern dedications fill.
Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
By arrogating Johnson's hostile name.
Let father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
Thou art my blood, where Johnson has no part:
What share have we in nature or in art?
Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
And rail at arts he did not understand?
Success let others teach, learn thou from me

Where made he love in prince Nicander's vein,
 Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble strain?
 Where fold he bargains, whip-stitch, kifs my arse,
 Promis'd a play, and dwindled to a farce?
 When did his muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
 As thou whole Eth'ridge dost transfuse to thine?
 But so transfus'd, as oil and waters flow,
 His always floats above, thine sinks below.
 This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
 New humours to invent for each new play:
 This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
 By which, one way, to dulness 'tis inclin'd:
 Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
 And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
 Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretence
 Of likeness; thine's a tympany of sense.
 A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
 But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin of wit.
 Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
 Thy tragic muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep.
 With whate'er gall thou set'st thyself to write,
 Thy inoffensive satires never bite.
 In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
 It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
 Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
 In keen lambics, but mild anagram.
 Leave writing plays, and chuse for thy command
 Some peaceful province in acrostic land.
 There thou may'st wings display, and altars raise,
 And torture one poor word ten thousand ways.
 Or if thou wouldst thy diff'rent talents suit,
 Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute.

He said; but his last words were scarcely heard :
For Bruce and Longvil had a trap prepar'd,
And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.
Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
Born upwards by a subterranean wind.
The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,
With double portion of his father's art.

A B S A L O M

A N D

A C H I T O P H E L.

IN pious times, ere priest-craft did begin,
Before polygamy was made a sin ;
When man on many multiply'd his kind,
Ere one to one was, cursedly, confin'd ;
When nature prompted, and no law deny'd
Promiscuous use of concubine and bride :
Then Israel's monarch, after Heav'n's own heart,
His vigorous warmth did variously impart
To wives and slaves ; and, wide as his command,
Scatter'd his Maker's image through the land.
Michal, of royal blood, the crown did wear ;
A foil ungrateful to the tiller's care :
Not so the rest ; for several mothers bore
To god-like David several sons before.
But, since like slaves his bed they did ascend,
No true succession could their seed attend.
Of all the numerous progeny was none
So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom :
Whether, inspir'd by some diviner lust,
His father got him with a greater gust ;

Or that his conscious destiny made way,
By manly beauty, to imperial sway.
Early in foreign fields he won renown,
With kings and states ally'd to Israel's crown :
In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,
And seem'd as he were only born for love.
Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
In him alone 'twas natural to please :
His motions all accompany'd with grace;
And Paradise was open'd in his face.
With secret joy indulgent David view'd
His youthful image in his son renew'd ;
To all his wishes nothing he deny'd ;
And made the charming Annabel his bride.
What faults he had, (for who from faults is free ?)
His father cou'd not, or he wou'd not see.
Some warm excesses, which the law forbore,
Were constru'd youth that purg'd by boiling o'er ;
And Amnon's murder, by a specious name,
Was call'd a just revenge for injur'd fame.
Thus prais'd, and lov'd, the noble youth remain'd,
While David undisturb'd in Sion reign'd.
But life can never be sincerely blest :
Heav'n punishes the bad, and proves the best.
The Jews, a head-strong, moody, murm'ring race,
As ever try'd th' extent and stretch of grace ;
God's pamper'd people, whom, debauch'd with ease,
No king cou'd govern, nor no God could please :
(Gods they had try'd of every shape and size,
That god-smiths cou'd produce, or priests devise :)
These Adam-wits too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted liberty ;

And when no rule, nor precedent was found,
 Of men, by laws less circumscrib'd and bound;
 They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
 And thought that all but savages were slaves.
 They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow,
 Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;
 Who banish'd David did from Hebron bring,
 And, with a general shout, proclaim'd him king:
 Those very Jews, who, at their very best,
 Their humour more than loyalty express'd,
 Now wonder'd why, so long, they had obey'd
 An idol monarch, which their hands had made;
 Thought they might ruin him they cou'd create,
 Or melt him to that golden calf, a state.
 But these were random bolts: No form'd design,
 Nor interest made the factious crowd to join:
 The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
 Well knew the value of a peaceful reign;
 And, looking backward, with a wise affright,
 Saw seams of wounds, dishonest to the sight:
 In contemplation of whose ugly scars,
 They curs'd the memory of civil wars.
 The moderate sort of men, thus qualify'd,
 Inclined the balance to the better side;
 And David's mildness manag'd it so well,
 The bad found no occasion to rebel.
 But, when to sin our bias'd nature leans,
 The careful devil is still at hand with means;
 And providently pimps for ill desires:
 'The good old cause reviv'd a plot requires.
 Plots, true or false, are necessary things,
 To raise up commonwealths and ruin kings.

Th' inhabitants of old Jerufalem
Were Jebusites ; the town fo call'd from them ;
And theirs the native right-----
But when the chofen people grew more ftrong,
The rightful caufe at length became the wrong ;
And every lofs the men of Jebus bore,
They ftill were thought God's enemies the more.
Thus, worn and weaken'd, well or ill content,
Submit they muft to David's government :
Impoverish'd and depriv'd of all command,
Their taxes doubled as they loft their land ;
And, what was harder yet to flefh and blood,
Their gods disgrac'd, and burnt like common wood.
This fet the heathen priesthood in a flame ;
For priests of all religions are the fame.
Of whatfoe'er defcent their godhead be,
Stock, ftone, or other homely pedigree,
In his defence his fervants are as bold,
As if he had been born of beaten gold.
The Jewish Rabbins, though their enemies,
In this conclude them honeft men and wife :
For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,
T' espoufe his caufe by whom they eat and drink.
From hence began that plot, the nation's curfe,
Bad in itfelf, but represented worfe ;
Rais'd in extremes, and in extremes decry'd ;
With oaths affirm'd, with dying vows deny'd ;
Not weigh'd or winnow'd by the multitude ;
But swallow'd in the mafs, unchew'd and crude.
Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies,
To please the fools, and puzzle all the wife.

Succeeding times did equal folly call,
 Believing nothing, or believing all.
 Th' Egyptian rites the Jebusites embrac'd;
 Where gods were recommended by their taste.
 Such fav'ry deities must needs be good,
 As serv'd at once for worship and for food.
 By force they could not introduce these gods;
 For ten to one, in former days, was odds.
 So fraud was us'd (the sacrificer's trade :)
 Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.
 Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
 And rak'd, for converts, even the court and stews:
 Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
 Because the fleece accompanies the flock.
 Some thought they God's anointed meant to slay
 By guns, invented since full many a day:
 Our author swears it not; but who can know
 How far the devil and Jebusites may go?
 This plot, which fail'd for want of common sense,
 Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:
 For as, when raging fevers boil the blood,
 The standing lakes soon float into a flood;
 And ev'ry hostile humour, which before
 Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er;
 So several factions, from this first ferment,
 Work up to foam, and threat the government.
 Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
 Oppos'd the power, to which they could not rise.
 Some had in courts been great, and, thrown from thence,
 Like fiends, were harden'd in impenitence.
 Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy grown,
 From pardon'd rebels, kinsmen to the throne,

Were rais'd in pow'r, and public office high;
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men cou'd tie;
Of these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages curs'd:
For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfix'd in principles and place;
In pow'r unpleas'd, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er-inform'd the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleas'd with the danger, when the waves went high,
He fought the storm; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands, to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near ally'd,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body, which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave, what with his toil he won,
To that unfeather'd, two-legg'd thing, a son;
Got, while his soul did huddl'd notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolv'd to ruin, or to rule the state;
To compass this, the triple bond he broke;
The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:
Then, seiz'd with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name.

So easy still it proves, in factious times,
 With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
 How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
 Where none can sin against the people's will?
 Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
 Since in another's guilt they find their own?
 Yet fame deserv'd no enemy can grudge;
 The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
 In Israel's court ne'er sat an Abethdin
 With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean;
 Unbrib'd, unfought, the wretched to redress;
 Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
 Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,
 With virtues only proper to the gown;
 Or, had the rankness of the soil been freed
 From cockle, that oppress'd the noble seed;
 David, for him, his tuneful harp had strung,
 And heav'n had wanted one immortal song.
 But wild ambition loves to slide, not stand,
 And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
 Achitophel, grown weary to possess
 A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
 Disdain'd the golden fruit to gather free,
 And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
 Now, manifest of crimes, contriv'd long since,
 He stood at bold defiance with his prince;
 Held up the buckler of the people's cause
 Against the crown, and sculk'd behind the laws.
 The wish'd occasion of the plot he takes;
 Some circumstances finds, but more he makes,
 By buzzing emissaries, fills the ears
 Of list'ning crowds with jealousies and fears

Of arbitrary counfels brought to light,
And proves the king himself a Jebusite.
Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
Were strong with people easy to rebel.
For, govern'd by the moon, the giddy Jews
'Tread the same track when she the prime renews;
And once in twenty years, their scribes record,
By natural instinct they change their lord.
Achitophel still wants a chief, and none
Was found so fit as warlike Absalom.
Not that he wish'd his greatness to create,
(For politicians neither love nor hate)
But, for he knew his title, not allow'd,
Would keep him still depending on the crowd:
That kingly pow'r, thus ebbing out, might be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
Him he attempts, with studied arts, to please,
And sheds his venom with such words as these:

Auspicious prince, at whose nativity
Some royal planet rul'd the southern sky;
Thy longing country's darling and desire;
Their cloudy pillar, and their guardian fire:
Their second Moses, whose extended wand
Divides the seas, and shews the promis'd land:
Whose dawning day, in every distant age,
Has exercis'd the sacred prophet's rage:
The people's pray'r, the glad diviner's theme,
The young mens vision, and the old mens dream!
Thee, favour, thee the nation's vows confess,
And, never satisfy'd with seeing, bless:
Swift unbespoken pomps thy steps proclaim,
And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.

How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
 Starve, and defraud the people of thy reign?
 Content ingloriously to pass thy days,
 Like one of Virtue's fools that feed on praise;
 'Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
 Grow stale, and tarnish with our daily sight?
 Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be
 Or gather'd ripe, or rot upon the tree.
 Heav'n has to all allotted, soon or late,
 Some lucky revolution of their fate:
 Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill,
 (For human good depends on human will)
 Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
 And from the first impression takes the bent:
 But if, unseiz'd, she glides away like wind,
 And leaves repenting folly far behind.
 Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize,
 And spreads her locks before her as she flies.
 Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,
 Not dar'd, when fortune call'd him, to be king,
 At Gath an exile he might still remain,
 And heav'n's anointing oil had been in vain.
 Let his successful youth your hopes engage;
 But shun th' example of declining age:
 Behold him setting in his Western skies,
 The shadows lengthening as the vapours rise.
 He is not now, as when on Jordan's sand
 The joyful people throng'd to see him land,
 Cov'ring the beach, and blackning all the strand;
 But, like the prince of Angels, from his height,
 Comes tumbling downward with diminish'd light:

Betray'd by one poor plot to public scorn :
(Our only blessing since his curst return :)
Those heaps of people, which one sheaf did bind,
Blown off, and scatter'd by a puff of wind.
What strength can he to your designs oppose,
Naked of friends, and round beset with foes ?
If Pharaoh's doubtful succour he should use,
A foreign aid would more incense the Jews:
Proud Egypt wou'd dissembled friendship bring;
Foment the war, but not support the king :
Nor wou'd the royal party e'er unite
With Pharaoh's arms, t' assist the Jebusite;
Or if they shou'd, their int'rest soon wou'd break,
And, with such odious aid, make David weak.
All sorts of men, by my successful arts,
Abhorring kings, estrange their alter'd hearts
From David's rule: And 'tis their general cry,
Religion, common-wealth, and liberty.
If you, as champion of the public good,
Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
What may not Israel hope, and what applause
Might such a general gain by such a cause ?
Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower,
Fair only to the sight, but solid pow'r:
And nobler is a limited command,
Giv'n by the love of all your native land,
Than a successive title, long and dark,
Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark.

What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
When flattery sooths, and when ambition blinds:
Desire of pow'r, on earth a vitious weed,
Yet, sprung from high, is of celestial seed :

In God 'tis glory ; and, when men aspire,
 'Tis but a spark too much of heav'nly fire.
 Th' ambitious youth, too covetous of fame,
 Too full of angels metal in his frame,
 Unwarily was led from Virtue's ways,
 Made drunk with honour, and debauch'd with praise.
 Half loath, and half consenting to the ill,
 (For royal blood within him struggled still,)

He thus reply'd.-----And what pretence have I
 To take up arms for public liberty ?
 My father governs with unquestion'd right ;
 The faith's defender, and mankind's delight ;
 Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws ;
 And Heav'n by wonders has espous'd his cause.
 Whom has he wrong'd in all his peaceful reign ?
 Who sues for justice to his throne in vain ?
 What millions has he pardon'd of his foes,
 Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose ?
 Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good ;
 Inclined to mercy, and averse from blood.
 If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
 His crime is God's beloved attribute.
 What could he gain, his people to betray,
 Or change his right for arbitrary sway ?
 Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
 His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.
 If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
 The Dog-star heats their brains to this disease.
 Why then should I, encouraging the bad,
 Turn rebel, and run popularly mad ?
 Were he a tyrant, who, by lawless might,
 Oppress'd the Jews, and rais'd the Jebusite,

Well might I mourn; but Nature's holy bands
Wou'd curb my spirits, and restrain my hands:
The people might assert their liberty;
But what was right in them, were crime in me.
His favour leaves me nothing to require,
Prevents my wishes, and out-runs desire:
What more can I expect, while David lives?
All but his kingly diadem he gives:
And that---but here he paus'd; then sighing, said,---
Is justly destin'd for a worthier head.
For when my father from his toils shall rest,
And late augment the number of the blest,
His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
Or the collat'ral line, where that shall end.
His brother, though oppress'd with vulgar spite,
Yet dauntless, and secure of native right,
Of every royal virtue stands possess'd;
Still dear to all the bravest and the best.
His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim;
His loyalty the king, the world his fame.
His mercy e'en th' offending crowd will find;
For sure he comes of a forgiving kind.
Why should I then repine at heav'n's decree,
Which gives me no pretence to royalty?
Yet oh that Fate, propitioussly inclin'd,
Had rais'd my birth, or had debas'd my mind;
To my large soul not all her treasure lent,
And then betray'd it to a mean descent!
I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,
And David's part disdains my mother's mould.
Why am I scant'd by a niggard birth?
My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth;

And, made for empire, whispers me within,
Desire of greatness is a god-like sin.

Him staggering so when Hell's dire agent found,
While fainting Virtue scarce maintain'd her ground,
He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies :

Th' eternal God, supremely good and wise,
Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain :
What wonders are reserv'd to bless your reign ?
Against your will your arguments have shown,
Such virtue's only given to guide a throne.
Not that your father's mildness I contemn ;
But manly force becomes the diadem.
'Tis true, he grants the people all they crave ;
And more, perhaps, than subjects ought to have :
For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,
And more his goodness, than his wit proclaim.
But, when should people strive their bonds to break,
If not when kings are negligent or weak ?
Let him give on till he can give no more,
The thrifty sanhedrim shall keep him poor ;
And every shekel, which he can receive,
Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.
To ply him with new plots, shall be my care ;
Or plunge him deep in some expensive war ;
Which when his treasure can no more supply,
He must, with the remains of kingship, buy
His faithful friends, our jealousies and fears
Call Jebusites, and Pharaoh's pensioners ;
Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
He shall be naked left to public scorn.
The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
My arts have made obnoxious to the state ;

Turn'd all his virtues to his overthrow,
And gain'd our elders to pronounce a foe.
His right, for sums of necessary gold,
Shall first be pawn'd, and afterwards be sold;
Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,
To pass your doubtful title into law;
If not, the people have a right supreme
To make their kings; for kings are made for them.
All empire is no more than pow'r in trust,
Which, when resum'd, can be no longer just.
Succession, for the general good design'd,
In its own wrong a nation cannot bind:
If altering that the people can relieve,
Better one suffer than a nation grieve.
The Jews well know their pow'r; ere Saul they chose,
God was their king, and God they durst depose.
Urge now your piety, your filial name,
A father's right, and fear of future fame;
The public good, that universal call,
To which e'en Heav'n submitted, answers all.
Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
'Tis nature's trick to propagate her kind.
Our fond begetters, who would never die,
Love but themselves in their posterity.
Or let his kindness by th' effects be try'd,
Or let him lay his vain pretence aside.
God said, he lov'd your father; could he bring
A better proof, than to anoint him king?
It surely shew'd he lov'd the shepherd well,
Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.
Would David have you thought his darling son?
What means he then to alienate the crown?

The name of godly he may blush to bear:
 'Tis after God's own heart to cheat his heir.
 He to his brother gives supreme command,
 To you a legacy of barren land;
 Perhaps th' old harp, on which he thrums his lays,
 Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise.
 Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
 Already looks on you with jealous eyes;
 Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
 And marks your progress in the peoples hearts;
 Though now his mighty soul in grief contains,
 He meditates revenge, who least complains;
 And like a lion, slumb'ring in the way,
 Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
 His fearless foes within his distance draws,
 Constrains his roaring, and contracts his paws;
 'Till, at the last, his time for fury found,
 He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground;
 The prostrate vulgar passes o'er, and spares,
 But with a lordly rage his hunters tears.
 Your case no tame expedients will afford:
 Resolve on death, or conquest by the sword,
 Which for no less a stake than life you draw;
 And self-defence is Nature's eldest law.
 Leave the warm people no considering time;
 For then rebellion may be thought a crime.
 Avail yourself of what occasion gives,
 But try your title while your father lives:
 And, that your arms may have a fair pretence,
 Proclaim, you take them in the king's defence;
 Whose sacred life each minute would expose
 To plots, from seeming friends, and secret foes.

And who can found the depth of David's soul?
Perhaps his fear his kindness may controul.
He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
For plighted vows too late to be undone.
If so, by force he wishes to be gain'd:
Like womens leachery to seem constrain'd.
Doubt not; but, when he most affects the frown,
Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
Secure his person to secure your cause:
They, who possess the prince, possess the laws.
He said, and this advice, above the rest,
With Absalom's mild nature suited best;
Unblam'd of life, (ambition set aside),
Not stain'd with cruelty, nor puffed with pride.
How happy had he been, if destiny
Had higher plac'd his birth, or not so high?
His kingly virtues might have claim'd a throne,
And blest all other countries but his own.
But charming greatness since so few refuse,
'Tis juster to lament him, than accuse.
Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
With blandishments to gain the public love:
To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
And popularly prosecute the plot.
To further this, Achitophel unites
The male-contents of all the Israelites:
Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
For several ends to serve the same design.
The best, and of the princes some were such,
Who thought the pow'r of monarchy too much;
Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;
Not wicked, but seduc'd by impious arts.

By these the springs of property were bent,
And wound so high, they crack'd the government:
'The next for int'rest fought t' embroil the state,
To sell their duty at a dearer rate;
And make their Jewish markets of the throne;
Pretending public good, to serve their own.
Others thought kings an uselefs heavy load,
Who cost too much, and did too little good.
These were for laying honest David by,
On principles of pure good husbandry.
With them join'd all the haranguers of the throng,
That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
Who follow next, a double danger bring,
Not only hating David, but the king;
The Solymaeen rout; well vers'd, of old,
In godly faction, and in treason bold;
Cowering and quaking at a conqu'ror's sword,
But lofty to a lawful prince restor'd;
Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun,
And scorn'd by Jebusites to be out-done.
Hot Levites headed these; who pull'd before
From th' ark, which in the judges days they bore,
Resum'd their cant, and, with a zealous cry,
Pursu'd their old belov'd theocracy:
Where fanhedrim and priest enslav'd the nation,
And justified their spoils by inspiration:
For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,
If once dominion they could found in grace?
These led the pack; tho' not of surest scent,
Yet deepest mouth'd against the government.
A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,
Of the true old enthusiastic breed:

'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
But far more numerous was the herd of such,
Who think too little, and who talk too much.
'These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
Ador'd their fathers God, and property ;
And, by the same blind benefit of fate,
The devil and the Jebusite did hate :
Born to be sav'd, e'en in their own despight,
Because they could not help believing right.
Such were the tools ; but a whole hydra more
Remains, of sprouting heads too long to score.
Some of their chiefs were princes of the land ;
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand :
A man so various, that he seem'd to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome :
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong ;
Was every thing by starts, and nothing long ;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fidler, statesman, and buffcon :
Then all for women, painting, rhiming, drinking ;
Besides ten thousand freaks that dy'd in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy !
Railing and praising were his usual themes ;
And both (to shew his judgment) in extremes :
So over violent, or over civil,
That every man with him, was god or devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art :
Nothing went unrewarded, but desert.
Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late ;
He had his jest, and they had his estate.

He laugh'd himself from court ; then fought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief :
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom, and wife Achitophel :
Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left.

Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
Of lords, below the dignity of verse.
Wits, warriors, commonwealths-men, were the best :
Kind husbands, and mere nobles, all the rest.
And therefore, in the name of Dulness, be
The well-hung Balaam, and cold Caleb free :
And canting Nadab let oblivion damn,
Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb.
Let friendship's holy band some names assure ;
Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure.
Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,
Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace :
Not bull-fac'd Jonas, who could statutes draw
To mean rebellion, and make treason law.
But he, though bad, is follow'd by a worse,
The wretch, who Heav'n's Anointed dar'd to curse ;
Shimei, whose youth did early promise bring
Of zeal to God, and hatred to his king ;
Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
And never broke the Sabbath, but for gain :
Nor ever was he known an oath to vent,
Or curse, unless against the government.
Thus, heaping wealth, by the most ready way
Among the Jews, which was to cheat and pray ;
The city, to reward his pious hate
Against his master, chose him magistrate.

His hand a vase of justice did uphold;
His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
During his office, treason was no crime;
The sons of Belial had a glorious time:
For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
Yet lov'd his wicked neighbour as himself.
When two or three were gather'd to declaim
Against the monarch of Jerusalem,
Shimei was always in the midst of them:
And, if they curs'd the king when he was by,
Would rather curse, than break good company.
If any durst his factious friends accuse,
He pack'd a jury of dissenting Jews;
Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
Would free the suff'ring saint from human laws.
For laws are only made to punish those,
Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
If any leisure time he had from pow'r,
(Because 'tis sin to mis-employ an hour :)
His bus'ness was, by writing, to persuade,
That kings were useless, and a clog to trade:
And, that his noble style he might refine,
No Rechabite more shunn'd the fumes of wine.
Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board.
The grossness of a city-feast abhorr'd:
His cooks, with long disuse, their trade forgot;
Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot.
Such frugal virtue malice may accuse;
But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews:
For towns, once burnt, such magistrates require
As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.

With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
 But free from flesh, that made the Jews rebel:
 And Moses' laws he held in more account,
 For forty days of fasting in the mount.
 To speak the rest, who better are forgot,
 Would tire a well-breath'd witness of the plot.
 Yet, Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass;
 Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
 High as the serpent of thy metal made,
 While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.
 What, tho' his birth were base, yet comets rise
 From earthly vapours ere they shine in skies.
 Prodigious actions may as well be done
 By weaver's issue, as by prince's son.
 This arch-attester for the public good
 By that one deed enobles all his blood.
 Who ever ask'd the witnesses high race,
 Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?
 Ours was a Levite, and, as times went then,
 His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
 Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
 Sure signs he neither cholerick was, nor proud;
 His long chin prov'd his wit; his faint-like grace
 A church vermilion, and a Moses' face.
 His memory, miraculously great,
 Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat;
 Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,
 For human wit could never such devise.
 Some future truths are mingled in his book:
 But where the witness fail'd, the prophet spoke:
 Some things like visionary flight appear;
 The spirit caught him up the Lord knows where;

And gave him his Rabinical degree,
Unknown to foreign university.
His judgment yet his mem'ry did excell;
Which piec'd his wondrous evidence so well,
And suited to the temper of the times,
Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.
Let Israel's foes suspect his heav'nly call,
And rashly judge his writ apocryphal;
Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made:
He takes his life, who takes away his trade.
Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
The wretch, who did me such a dire disgrace,
Shou'd whet my memory, though once forgot,
To make him an appendix of my plot.
His zeal to heav'n made him his prince despise,
And load his person with indignities.
But zeal peculiar privilege affords,
Indulging latitude to deeds and words:
And Corah might for Agag's murder call,
In terms as coarse as Samuel us'd to Saul.
What others in his evidence did join,
(The best that cou'd be had for love or coin)
In Corah's own predicament will fall:
For *witness* is a common name to all.

Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,
Deluded Absalom forsakes the court:
Impatient of high hopes, urg'd with renown,
And fir'd with near possession of a crown.
'Th' admiring crowd are dazzled with surprize,
And on his goodly person feed their eyes.
His joy conceal'd, he sets himself to show;
On each side bowing popularly low:

His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames
 And with familiar ease repeats their names.
 Thus form'd by nature, furnish'd out with arts,
 He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
 Then, with a kind compassionating look,
 And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke,
 Few words he said ; but easy those and fit,
 More slow than Hybla drops, and far more sweet.

I mourn, my countrymen, your lost estate ;
 Though far unable to prevent your fate :
 Behold a banish'd man, for your dear cause
 Expos'd a prey to arbitrary laws !
 Yet oh ! that I alone cou'd be undone,
 Cut off from empire, and no more a son !
 Now all your liberties a spoil are made ;
 Ægypt and Tyrus intercept your trade,
 And Jebusites your sacred rites invade. }
 My father, whom with reverence yet I name,
 Charm'd into ease, is careless of his fame ;
 And, brib'd with petty sums of foreign gold,
 Is grown in Bathsheba's embraces old ;
 Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys ;
 And all his pow'r against himself employs.
 He gives, and let him give, my right away :
 But why should he his own, and yours betray ?
 He, only he, can make the nation bleed,
 And he alone from my revenge is freed.
 Take then my tears, (with that he wip'd his eyes)
 'Tis all the aid my present pow'r supplies :
 No court-informer can these arms accuse ;
 These arms may sons against their father's use ;

And 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign
May make no other Israelite complain.

Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom fail;
But common interest always will prevail:

And pity never ceases to be shown

'To him who makes the people's wrongs his own.

The crowd (that still believe their kings oppress)

With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:

Who now begins his progress to ordain

With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train:

From east to west his glories he displays,

And, like the sun, the promis'd land surveys.

Fame runs before him, as the morning-star,

And shouts of joy salute him from afar:

Each house receives him as a guardian god,

And consecrates the place of his abode.

But hospitable treats did most commend

Wise Issachar, his wealthy western friend.

This moving court, that caught the people's eyes,

And seem'd but pomp, did other ends disguise:

Achitophel had form'd it, with intent

To sound the depths, and fathom, where it went,

The people's hearts distinguish'd friends from foes;

And try their strength before they came to blows.

Yet all was colour'd with a smooth pretence

Of specious love, and duty to their prince.

Religion, and redress of grievances,

Two names, that always cheat, and always please,

Are often urg'd; and good King David's life

Endanger'd by a brother and a wife.

Thus in a pageant shew a plot is made;

And peace itself is war in masquerade.

Oh foolish Israel! never warn'd by ill!
 Still the same bait, and circumvented still!
 Did ever men forsake their present ease,
 In midst of health imagine a disease;
 Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
 Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?
 What shall we think? Can people give away,
 Both for themselves and sons, their native sway?
 Then they are left defenceless to the sword
 Of each unbounded, arbitrary, lord:
 And laws are vain, by which we right enjoy,
 If kings unquestion'd can those laws destroy.
 Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just,
 And kings are only officers in trust,
 Then this resuming cov'nant was declar'd
 When kings are made, or is for ever barr'd.
 If those, who gave the scepter, cou'd not tie
 By their own deed their own posterity;
 How then cou'd Adam bind his future race?
 How cou'd his forfeit on mankind take place?
 Or how cou'd heav'nly justice damn us all,
 Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?
 Then kings are slaves to those whom they command,
 And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.
 Add, that the pow'r for property allow'd
 Is mischievously seated in the crowd:
 For who can be secure of private right,
 If sovereign sway may be dissolv'd by might?
 Nor is the people's judgment always true:
 The most may err as grossly as the few;
 And faultless kings run down by common cry,
 For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.

What standard is there in a fickle rout,
Which, flowing to the mark, runs faster out?
Nor only crowds, but sanhedrims may be
Infected with the public lunacy,
And share the madness of rebellious times,
To murder monarchs for imagin'd crimes.
If they may give and take whene'er they please,
Not kings alone, the Godhead's images,
But government itself at length must fall
To nature's state, where all have right to all.
Yet, grant our lords the people kings can make,
What prudent man a settled throne wou'd shake?
For whatsoe'er their sufferings were before,
That change they covet makes them suffer more.
All other errors but disturb a state :
But innovation is the blow of fate.
If antient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,
To patch the flaws, and buttress up the wall ;
Thus far 'tis duty : But here fix the mark ;
For all beyond it is to touch the ark :
To change foundations, cast the frame anew,
Is work for rebels, who base ends pursue ;
At once divine and human laws controul,
And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.
The tamp'ring world is subject to this curse,
To physic their disease into a worse.

Now what relief can righteous David bring ?
How fatal 'tis to be too good a king !
Friends he has few, so high the madness grows ;
Who dare be such, must be the people's foes.
Yet some there were, e'en in the worst of days ;
Some let me name, and naming is to praise.

In this short file Barzillai first appears;
 Barzillai, crown'd with honour and with years.
 Long since the rising rebels he withstood
 In regions waste beyond the Jordan's flood:
 Unfortunately brave, to buoy the state;
 But sinking underneath his master's fate:
 In exile with his god-like prince he mourn'd;
 For him he suffer'd, and with him return'd.
 The court he practis'd, not the courtier's art:
 Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart;
 Which well the noblest objects knew to chuse,
 The fighting warrior, and recording muse.
 His bed cou'd once a fruitful issue boast;
 No more than half a father's name is lost.
 His eldest hope, with every grace adorn'd,
 By me (so heav'n will have it) always mourn'd,
 And always honour'd, snatch'd in manhood's prime
 B' unequal fates, and providence's crime:
 Yet not before the goal of honour won,
 All parts fulfill'd of subject and of son:
 Swift was the race, but short the time to run.
 Oh narrow circle, but of pow'r divine,
 Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!
 By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known,
 Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own:
 Thy force infus'd the fainting Tyrians prop'd;
 And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stop'd.
 Oh antient honour, oh unconquer'd hand,
 Whom foes unpunish'd never cou'd withstand!
 But Israel was unworthy of his name:
 Short is the date of all immoderate fame.

It looks as heav'n our ruin had design'd,
And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.
Now, free from earth, thy disincumber'd soul
Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry
pole :
From thence thy kindred legions may'st thou bring,
To aid the guardian angel of thy king.
Here stop, my Muse, here cease thy painful flight :
No pinions can pursue immortal height :
Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,
And tell thy soul she should have fled before :
Or fled she with his life, and left this verse
To hang on her departed patron's hearse ?
Now take thy steepy flight from heav'n, and see
If thou canst find on earth another he :
Another he wou'd be too hard to find ;
See then whom thou canst see not far behind.
Zadoc the priest, whom, shunning pow'r and place,
His lowly mind advanc'd to David's grace.
With him the Sagan of Jerusalem,
Of hospitable soul, and noble stem ;
Him of the western dome, whose mighty sense
Flows in fit words and heav'nly eloquence.
The prophets sons, by such example led,
To learning, and to loyalty were bred :
For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
And never rebel was to arts a friend.
To these succeed the pillars of the laws ;
Who best can plead, and best can judge a cause.
Next them a train of loyal peers ascend ;
Sharp-judging Adriel, the Muse's friend,

Himself a Muse: In sanhedrim's debate
True to his prince, but not a slave of state:
Whom David's love with honours did adorn,
That from his disobedient son were torn.
Jotham of piercing wit, and pregnant thought,
Endu'd by nature, and by learning taught,
To move assemblies, who but only try'd
The worse a while, then chose the better side:
Nor chose alone, but turn'd the balance too;
So much the weight of one brave man can do.
Hushai, the friend of David in distress;
In public storms of manly steadfastness:
By foreign treaties he inform'd his youth,
And join'd experience to his native truth.
His frugal care supply'd the wanting throne;
Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own:
'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow;
But hard the task to manage well the low.
For sovereign pow'r is too depress'd on high,
When kings are forc'd to sell, or crowds to buy.
Indulge one labour more, my weary Muse,
For Amiel; who can Amiel's praise refuse?
Of antient race by birth, but nobler yet
In his own worth, and without title great.
The sanhedrim long time as chief he rul'd,
Their reasons guided, and their passion cool'd:
So dextrous was he in the crown's defence,
So form'd to speak a loyal nation's sense,
That, as their band was Israel's tribes in small,
So fit was he to represent them all.
Now rather charioteers the seat ascend,
Whose loose careers his steady skill commend:

They, like th' unequal ruler of the day,
 Misguide the seasons, and mistake the way;
 While he withdrawn at their mad labour smiles,
 And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.

These were the chief; a small but faithful band }
 Of worthies, in the breach who dar'd to stand,
 And tempt th' united fury of the land. }
 With grief they view'd such powerful engines bent,
 To batter down the lawful government.
 A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
 In sanhedrims to plume the regal rights;
 The true successor from the court remov'd;
 The plot, by hireling witnesses, improv'd.
 These ills they saw, and, as their duty bound,
 They shew'd the king the danger of the wound;
 That no concessions from the throne would please,
 But lenitives fomented the disease:
 That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
 Was made the lure to draw the people down:
 That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
 Had turn'd the plot to ruin church and state:
 The council violent, the rabble worse;
 That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.

With all these loads of injuries oppress'd,
 And long revolving in his careful breast
 Th' event of things; at last, his patience tir'd,
 Thus, from his royal throne, by heav'n inspir'd,
 The god-like David spoke: With awful fear
 His train their Maker in their Master hear.

Thus long have I, by native mercy sway'd,
 My wrongs dissembled, my revenge delay'd:

So willing to forgive th' offending age;
So much the father did the king assuage.
But now so far my clemency they slight,
Th' offenders question my forgiving right.
'That one was made for many, they contend;
But 'tis to rule; for that's a monarch's end.
They call my tendernefs of blood, my fear:
Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
Yet, since they will divert my native course,
'Tis time to shew I am not good by force.
Those heap'd affronts, that haughty subjects bring,
Are burdens for a camel, not a king.
Kings are the public pillars of the state,
Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight:
If my young Sampson will pretend a call
To shake the column, let him share the fall:
But, oh, that yet he would repent and live!
How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!
With how few tears a pardon might be won
From nature, pleading for a darling son!
Poor, pitied youth, by my paternal care,
Rais'd up to all the height his frame cou'd bear!
Had God ordain'd his fate for empire born,
He wou'd have giv'n his soul another turn:
Gull'd with a pratriot's name, whose modern sense
Is one that wou'd by law supplant his prince;
The people's brave, the politician's tool;
Never was patriot yet, but was a fool.
Whence comes it, that religion and the laws
Should more be Absalom's than David's cause?
His old instructor, ere he lost his place,
Was never thought endu'd with so much grace.

Good heav'ns, how faction can a patriot paint!
My rebel ever proves my people's faint.
Wou'd they impose an heir upon the throne?
Let Sanhedrims be taught to give their own.
A King's at least a part of government;
And mine as requisite as their consent:
Without my leave a future king to chuse,
Infers a right the present to depose.
True, they petition me t' approve their choice:
But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.
My pious subjects for my safety pray;
Which to secure, they take my pow'r away.
From plots and treasons Heav'n preserve my years,
But save me most from my petitioners.
Unsatiate as the barren womb or grave;
God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
What then is left, but with a jealous eye
To guard the small remains of royalty?
The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
And the same law teach rebels to obey:
Votes shall no more establish'd pow'r controul,
Such votes as make a part exceed the whole.
No groundless clamours shall my friends remove,
Nor crowds have pow'r to punish ere they prove;
For gods and god-like kings their care expresse,
Still to defend their servants in distress.
Oh, that my power to saving were confin'd!
Why am I forc'd, like Heav'n, against my mind,
To make examples of another kind?
Must I at length the sword of justice draw?
Oh curst effects of necessary law!

How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!
Beware the fury of a patient man.
Law they require, let law then shew her face;
They could not be content to look on grace,
Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
To tempt the terror of her front, and die.
By their own arts, 'tis righteously decreed,
Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
Against themselves their witnesses will swear,
'Till viper-like, their mother-plot they tear;
And suck for nutriment that bloody gore,
Which was their principle of life before.
Their Belial with their Beelzebub will fight:
Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right.
Nor doubt th' event: For factious crowds engage,
In their first onset, all their brutal rage.
Then let 'em take an unresisted course:
Retire, and traverse, and delude their force:
But when they stand all breathless, urge the fight,
And rise upon them with redoubled might:
For lawful pow'r is still superior found;
When long driv'n back, at length it stands the ground.

He said: Th' Almighty nodding gave consent;
And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
Henceforth a series of new time began,
The mighty years in long procession ran:
Once more the god like David was restor'd,
And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

Part of the Second Part of
 ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

N. B. *The rest of this POEM, written by Mr Tate, is extant in the Second Part of Miscellany POEMS, published by Mr Dryden.*

NEXT these, a troop of busy spirits press,
 Of little fortunes, and of conscience less.
 With them the tribe, whose luxury had drain'd
 Their banks, in former sequestrations gain'd;
 Who rich and great by past rebellions grew,
 And long to fish the troubled streams anew.
 Some future hopes, some present payment draws,
 To sell their conscience, and espouse the cause.
 Such stipends those vile hirelings best besit,
 Priests without grace, and poets without wit.
 Shall that false Hebronite escape our curse,
 Judas, that keeps the rebels pension purse;
 Judas, that pays the treason-writer's fee;
 Judas, that well deserves his name-fake's tree:
 Who at Jerusalem's own gates erects
 His college for a nursery of sects;
 Young prophets with an early care secures,
 And with the dung of his own arts manures.
 What have the men of Hebron here to do?
 What part in Israel's promis'd land have you?
 Here Phaleg the Lay-Hebronite is come,
 'Cause like the rest he could not live at home;

Who from his own possessions could not drain
An omer even of Hebronitish grain ;
Here struts it like a patriot, and talks high
Of injur'd subjects alter'd property :
An emblem of that buzzing insect just,
'That mounts the wheel, and thinks she raises dust.
Can dry bones live ; or skeletons produce
The vital warmth of cuckoldizing juice ?
Slim Phaleg cou'd, and, at the table fed,
Return'd the grateful product to the bed.
A waiting-man to trav'ling nobles 'chose,
He his own laws would faucily impose ;
'Till bastinado'd back again he went,
To learn those manners he to teach was sent.
Chastis'd, he ought to have retreated home,
But he reads politics to Absalom.
For never Hebronite, tho' kick'd and scorn'd,
To his own country willingly return'd.
But leaving famish'd Phaleg to be fed,
And to talk treason for his daily bread,
Let Hebron, nay let Hell produce a man,
So made for mischief as Ben-Jochanan.
A Jew of humble parentage was he,
By trade a Levite, though of low degree.
His pride no higher than the desk aspir'd,
But for the drudgery of priests was hir'd,
To read and pray in linen ephod brave,
And pick up single shekels from the grave.
Married at last, but finding charge come faster,
He could not live by God, but chang'd his master ;
Inspir'd by want, was made a factious tool ;
They got a villain, and we lost a fool.

Still violent, whatever cause he took,
But most against the party he forsook.
For renegadoes, who ne'er turn by halves,
Are bound in conscience to be double knaves.
So this prose prophet took most monstrous pains,
To let his master see he earn'd his gains.
But as the dev'l owes all his imps a shame,
He chose th' apostate for his proper theme;
With little pains he made the picture true,
And from reflection took the rogue he drew.
A wond'rous work, to prove the Jewish nation
In ev'ry age a murm'ring generation;
To trace 'em from their infancy of sinning,
And shew 'em factious from their first beginning:
To prove they could rebel, and rail, and mock,
Much to the credit of the chosen flock;
And strong authority, which must convince,
That saints owe no allegiance to their prince:
As 'tis a leading card to make a whore,
To prove her mother had turn'd up before.
But, tell me, did the drunken patriarch bless
The son that shew'd his father's nakedness?
Such thanks the present church thy pen will give,
Which proves rebellion was so primitive.
Must antient failings be examples made?
Then murderers from Caen may learn their trade.
As thou the heathen and the saint hast drawn,
Methinks th' apostate was the better man:
And thy hot father (waving my respect)
Not of a mother-church, but of a sect.
And such he needs must be of thy inditing;
This comes of drinking asses milk, and writing.

If Balak should be call'd to leave his place,
(As profit is the loudest call of grace)
His temple, dispossefs'd of one, would be
Replenish'd with seven devils more by thee.

Levi, thou art a load, I'll lay thee down,
And shew rebellion bare, without a gown;
Poor slaves in metre, dull and addle pated,
Who rhyme below ev'n David's Psalms translated.
Some in my speedy pace I must out-run,
As lame Mephibosheth the wizard's son:
To make quick way, I'll leap o'er heavy blocks,
Shun rotten Uzza as I would the pox;
And hasten Og and Doeg to rehearse,
Two fools that crutch their feeble sense on verse;
Who, by my Muse, to all succeeding times
Shall live, in spite of their own dogrel rhimes.

Doeg, though without knowing how or why,
Made still a blundering kind of melody;
Spurr'd boldly on, and dash'd through thick and thin;
Through sense and nonsense, never out nor in;
Free from all meaning, whether good or bad,
And, in one word, heroically mad:
He was too warm on picking-work to dwell,
But faggoted his notions as they fell,
And if they rhim'd and rattled, all was well. }
Spiteful he is not, though he wrote a satire,
For still there goes some *thinking* to ill-nature:
He needs no more than birds and beasts to think;
All his occasions are to eat and drink.
If he call rogue and rascal from a garret,
He means you no more mischief than a parrot:

The words for friend and foe alike were made;
 To fetter 'em in verse is all his trade.
 For almonds he'll cry whore to his own mother,
 And call young Absalom King David's brother.
 Let him be gallows-free by my consent,
 And nothing suffer, since he nothing meant:
 Hanging supposes human soul and reason,
 This animal's below committing treason:
 Shall he be hang'd, who never could rebel?
 That's a preferment for Achitophel.
 The woman that committed buggary,
 Was rightly sentenc'd by the law to die:
 But 'twas hard fate that to the gallows led
 The dog, that never heard the statute read.
 Railing in other men may be a crime,
 But ought to pass for mere instinct in him:
 Instinct he follows, and no farther knows;
 For to write verse with him is to *transprose*.
 'Twere pity treason at his door to lay,
 Who *makes heav'n's gate a lock to its own key*.
 Let him rail on; let his invective muse
 Have four and twenty letters to abuse,
 Which if he jumbles to one line of sense,
 Indict him of a capital offence.
 In fire-works give him leave to vent his spite:
 Those are the only serpents he can write;
 The height of his ambition is, we know,
 But to be master of a puppet-show:
 On that one stage his works may yet appear;
 And a month's harvest keeps him all the year.

Now stop your noses, readers, all and some;
 For here's a tun of midnight-work to come,
 Og from a treason-tavern rolling home.

Round as a globe, and liquor'd ev'ry chink,
Goodly and great he fails behind his link.
With all this bulk there's nothing lost in Og,
For ev'ry inch, that is not fool, is rogue;
A monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,
As all the devils had spew'd to make the batter.
When wine has given him courage to blaspheme,
He curses God; but God before curst him:
And if man could have reason, none has more,
That made his paunch so rich, and him so poor.
With wealth he was not trusted, for Heav'n knew,
What 'twas of old to pamper up a Jew;
'To what would he on quail and pheasant swell,
That ev'n on tripe and carrion could rebel?
But though heav'n made him poor, (with rev'rence
speaking)

He never was a poet of God's making.
The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull,
With this prophetic blessing-----*Be thou dull*;
Drink, swear, and roar, forbear no lewd delight
Fit for thy bulk; do any thing but write:
'Thou art of lasting make, like thoughtless men;
A strong nativity, but for the pen.
Eat opium, mingle arsenic in thy drink,
Still thou may'st live, avoiding pen and ink.
I see, I see, 'tis counsel giv'n in vain,
For treason botch'd in rhyme will be thy bane:
Rhyme is the rock, on which thou art to wreck;
'Tis fatal to thy fame and to thy neck.
Why should thy metre good King David blast?
A psalm of his will surely be thy last.

Dar'st thou presume in verse to meet thy foes,
Thou, whom the penny pamphlet foil'd in prose?
Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has made,
O'ertops thy talent in thy very trade :
Doeg to thee, thy paintings are so coarse,
A poet is, though he's the poet's horse.
A double noose thou on thy neck dost pull,
For writing treason, and for writing dull.
To die for faction is a common evil ;
But to be hang'd for nonsense is the devil.
Hadst thou the glories of thy king exprest,
Thy praises had been satires at the best ;
But thou in clumsy verse, unlick'd, unpointed,
Hast shamefully defy'd the Lord's anointed.
I will not rake the dunghill of thy crimes ;
For who would read thy life, that reads thy rhimes ?
But of King David's foes be this the doom ;
May all be like the young man Absalom ;
And for my foes, may this their blessing be,
To talk like Doeg, and to write like thee.

THE
MEDAL.

A
SATIRE

AGAINST

SEDITION.

Per Graium populos, mediaeque per Elidis urbem,
Ibat ovans, Divumque sibi poscebat honores.

VIRG.

NOTES

The first part of the paper is devoted to a description of the various species of the genus, and to a comparison of the same with the corresponding species of the other genera of the family.

M E D I C I N E

The second part of the paper is devoted to a description of the various species of the genus, and to a comparison of the same with the corresponding species of the other genera of the family.

S A T I R E

The third part of the paper is devoted to a description of the various species of the genus, and to a comparison of the same with the corresponding species of the other genera of the family.

S E D I T I O N

The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a description of the various species of the genus, and to a comparison of the same with the corresponding species of the other genera of the family.

The fifth part of the paper is devoted to a description of the various species of the genus, and to a comparison of the same with the corresponding species of the other genera of the family.

VIC.

E P I S T L E

T O T H E

W H I G S.

FOR to whom can I dedicate this poem, with so much justice, as to you? 'Tis the representation of your own hero; 'tis the picture drawn at length, which you admire and prize so much in little. None of your ornaments are wanting; neither the landkip of the Tower, nor the Rising Sun; nor the *Anno Domini* of your new sovereign's coronation. This must needs be a grateful undertaking to your whole party; especially to those who have not been so happy as to purchase the original. I hear the graver has made a good market of it: All his kings are bought up already; or the value of the remainder so enhanced, that many a poor Polander, who would be glad to worship the image, is not able to go to the cost of him; but must be content to see him here. I must confess, I am no great artist; but sign-post-painting will serve the turn to remember a friend by; especially when better is not to be had. Yet for your comfort the lineaments are true; and though he sat not five times to me, as he did to B. yet I have consulted history; as the Italian painters do, when they would draw a Nero or a Caligula;

though they have not seen the man, they can help their imagination by a statue of him, and find out the colouring from Suetonius and Tacitus. Truth is, you might have spared one side of your medal: The head would be seen to more advantage, if it were placed on a spike of the Tower; a little nearer to the sun; which would then break out to better purpose. You tell us, in your preface to the No-Protestant Plot, that you shall be forced hereafter to leave off your modesty. I suppose you mean that little which is left you: For it was worn to rags when you put out this Medal. Never was there practised such a piece of notorious impudence in the face of an established government. I believe when he is dead, you will wear him in thumb-rings as the Turks did Scanderbeg; as if there were virtue in his bones to preserve you against monarchy. Yet all this while you pretend not only zeal for the public good, but a due veneration for the person of the king. But all men, who can see an inch before them, may easily detect those gross fallacies. That it is necessary for men in your circumstances to pretend both, is granted you; for without them there could be no ground to raise a faction. But I would ask you one civil question: What right has any man among you, or any association of men, (to come nearer to you) who, out of parliament, cannot be considered in a public capacity, to meet, as you daily do, in factious clubs, to vilify the government in your discourses, and to libel it in all your writings? Who made you judges in Israel? Or how is it consistent with your zeal for the public welfare, to promote sedition? Does your definition of loyal, which is to serve the king ac-

according to the laws, allow you the licence of traducing the executive power, with which you own he is invested? You complain, that his majesty has lost the love and confidence of his people; and, by your very urging it, you endeavour, what in you lies, to make him lose them. All good subjects abhor the thought of arbitrary power, whether it be in one or many: If you were the patriots you would seem, you would not, at this rate, incense the multitude to assume it; for no sober man can fear it, either from the king's disposition or his practice; or even, where you would odiously lay it, from his ministers. Give us leave to enjoy the government, and the benefit of laws, under which we were born, and which we desire to transmit to our posterity. You are not the trustees of the public liberty; and, if you have not right to petition in a crowd, much less have you to intermeddle in the management of affairs, or to arraign what you do not like; which, in effect, is every thing that is done by the king and council. Can you imagine, that any reasonable man will believe you respect the person of his majesty, when 'tis apparent that your seditious pamphlets are stuffed with particular reflections on him? If you have the confidence to deny this, 'tis easy to be evinced, from a thousand passages, which I only forbear to quote, because I desire they should die and be forgotten. I have perused many of your papers; and, to shew you that I have, the third part of your No-Protestant Plot is much of it stolen from your dead author's pamphlet, called the Growth of Popery; as manifestly as Milton's defence of the English People is from Buchanan, *de Jure Regni apud Scotos*; or your first Co-

venant, and new Association, from the holy League of the French Guifards. Any one, who reads Davila, may trace your practices all along. There were the same pretences for reformation, and loyalty, the same aspersions of the king, and the same grounds of a rebellion. I know not whether you will take the historian's word, who says, it was reported, that Poltrot a Huguenot murdered Francis Duke of Guise, by the instigations of Theodore Beza : Or that it was a Huguenot minister, otherwise called a Presbyterian, (for our church abhors so devilish a tenet) who first wrote a treatise of the lawfulness of deposing and murdering kings, of a different persuasion in religion. But I am able to prove, from the doctrine of Calvin, and principles of Buchanan, that they set the people above the magistrate; which, if I mistake not, is your own fundamental ; and which carries your loyalty no farther than your liking. When a vote of the house of commons goes on your side, you are as ready to observe it, as if it were passed into a law ; but when you are pinched with any former, and yet unrepealed, act of parliament, you declare that in some cases you will not be obliged by it. The passage is in the same third part of the No-Protestant Plot ; and is too plain to be denied. The late copy of your intended Association you neither wholly justify nor condemn ; but, as the Papists, when they are unopposed, fly out into all the pageantries of worship, but, in times of war, when they are hard pressed by arguments, lie close intrenched behind the council of Trent ; so, now, when your affairs are in a low condition, you dare not pretend that to be a legal combination : But, whensoever you are afloat,

I doubt not but it will be maintained and justified to purpose. For indeed there is nothing to defend it but the sword: 'Tis the proper time to say any thing, when men have all things in their power.

In the mean time, you would fain be nibbling at a parallel betwixt this association, and that in the time of Queen Elizabeth. But there is this small difference betwixt them, that the ends of the one are directly opposite to the other: One with the Queen's approbation and conjunction, as head of it; the other without either the consent or knowledge of the King, against whose authority it is manifestly designed. Therefore you do well to have recourse to your last evasion, that it was contrived by your enemies, and shuffled into the papers that were seized; which yet you see the nation is not so easy to believe, as your own jury. But the matter is not difficult, to find twelve men in Newgate who would acquit a malefactor.

I have one only favour to desire of you at parting; that, when you think of answering this Poem, you would employ the same pens against it, who have combated with so much success against Absalom and Achitophel; for then you may assure yourselves of a clear victory, without the least reply. Rail at me abundantly; and, not to break a custom, do it without wit: By this method you will gain a considerable point, which is, wholly to wave the answer of my arguments. Never own the bottom of your principles, for fear they should be treason. Fall severely on the miscarriages of government; for if scandal be not allowed, you are no free-born subjects. If God has not blessed you with the talent of rhiming, make use of my poor stock and wel-

come; let your verses run upon my feet; and for the utmost refuge of notorious blockheads, reduced to the last extremity of sense, turn my own lines upon me, and in utter despair of your own satire, make me satirize myself. Some of you have been driven to this bay already: But, above all the rest, commend me to the non-conformist parson, who writ the Whip and Key. I am afraid it is not read so much as the piece deserves, because the bookseller is every week crying *help* at the end of his Gazette, to get it off. You see I am charitable enough to do him a kindness, that it may be published as well as printed; and that so much skill in Hebrew derivations may not lie for waste-paper in the shop. Yet I half suspect he went no farther for his learning, than the index of Hebrew names and etymologies, which is printed at the end of some English Bibles. If Achitophel signify the brother of a fool, the author of that poem will pass with his readers for the next of kin. And, perhaps, 'tis the relation that makes the kindness. Whatever the verses are, buy 'em up, I beseech you, out of pity; for I hear the conventicle is shut up, and the brother of Achitophel out of service.

Now footmen, you know, have the generosity to make a purse, for a member of their society who has had his livery pulled over his ears; and even Protestant socks are bought up among you, out of veneration to the name. A dissenter in poetry from sense and English, will make as good a protestant rhimer, as a dissenter from the church of England a protestant parson. Besides, if you encourage a young beginner, who knows but he may elevate his style a little above the vulgar epithets of *prophane* and *saucy Jack*, and *Atheistic Scrib-*

bler, with which he treats me, when the fit of enthusiasm is strong upon him? By which well-mannered and charitable expressions, I was certain of his sect, before I knew his name. What would you have more of a man? He has damned me in your cause from Genesis to the Revelations, and has half the texts of both the Testaments against me, if you will be so civil to yourselves as to take him for your interpreter, and not to take them for Irish witnesses. After all, perhaps you will tell me, that you retained him only for the opening of your cause, and that your main lawyer is yet behind. Now if it so happen he meet with no more reply than his predecessors, you may either conclude, that I trust to the goodness of my cause, or fear my adversary, or disdain him, or what you please; for the short on't is, 'tis indifferent to your humble servant, whatever your party says or thinks of him.

THE
M E D A L
A

SATIRE against SEDITION.

O F all our antic sights, and pageantry,
Which English idiots run in crowds to see,
The Polish Medal bears the prize alone ;
A monster, more the fav'rite of the town,
Than either fairs or theatres have shown. }
Never did art so well with nature strive ;
Nor ever idol seem'd so much alive :
So like the man ; so golden to the sight,
So base within, so counterfeit and light.
One side is fill'd with title and with face ;
And, lest the king should want a regal place,
On the reverse, a tow'r the town surveys ;
O'er which our mounting sun his beams displays.
The word, pronounc'd aloud by shrieval voice,
Laetamur, which, in Polish, is *rejoice*.
The day, month, year, to the great act are join'd ;
And a new canting holiday design'd.
Five days he sat, for every cast and look ;
Four more than God to finish Adam took.
But who can tell what essence angels are,
Or how long Heav'n was making Lucifer ?
O, could the style that copy'd ev'ry grace,
And plough'd such furrows for an eunuch face,

Could it have form'd his ever-changing will,
 The various piece had tir'd the graver's skill!
 A martial hero first, with early care,
 Blown, like a pigmy by the winds, to war:
 A beardless chief; a rebel, ere a man:
 (So young his hatred to his prince began.)
 Next this, (how wildly will ambition steer!)
 A vermin, wriggling in the usurper's ear;
 Bart'ring his venal wit for fums of gold,
 He cast himself into the faint-like mould;
 Groan'd, sigh'd, and pray'd, while godliness was gain;
 The loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train.
 But, as 'tis hard to cheat a juggler's eyes,
 His open lewdness he could ne'er disguise.
 There split the faint: For hypocritic zeal
 Allows no sins but those it can conceal.
 Whoring to scandal gives too large a scope:
 Saints must not trade; but they may interlope.
 Th' ungodly principle was all the same:
 But a gross cheat betrays his part'ner's game.
 Besides, their pace was formal, grave and slack;
 His nimble wit outran the heavy pack.
 Yet still he found his fortune at a stay:
 Whole droves of blockheads choaking up the way:
 They took, but not rewarded his advice;
 Villain and wit exact a double price.
 Pow'r was his aim; but thrown from that pretence,
 The wretch turn'd loyal in his own defence,
 And malice reconcil'd him to his prince. }
 Him, in the anguish of his soul, he serv'd;
 Rewarded faster still than he deserv'd.

Behold him now exalted into trust ;
His counsels oft convenient, seldom just.
E'en in the most sincere advice he gave,
He had a grudging still to be a knave.
'The frauds he learn'd in his fanatic years,
Made him uneasy in his lawful gears :
At best, as little honest as he cou'd :
And, like white witches, mischievously good.
To his first bias, longingly, he leans ;
And rather would be great by wicked means.
'Thus, fram'd for ill, he loos'd our triple hold ;
(Advice unsafe, precipitous, and bold,)
From hence those tears ; that Ilium of our woe :
Who helps a pow'rful friend, fore-arms a foe.
What wonder if the waves prevail so far,
When he cut down the banks that made the bar ?
Seas follow but their nature to invade ;
But he by art our native strength betray'd.
So Sampson to his foe his force confest,
And, to be shorn, lay slumb'ring on her breast.
But, when this fatal counsel, found too late,
Expos'd its author to the public hate ;
When his just sov'reign, by no impious way,
Could be seduc'd to arbitrary sway ;
Forfaken of that hope, he shifts the sail ;
Drives down the current with a pop'lar gale ;
And shews the fiend confess'd, without the veil. }
He preaches to the crowd, that pow'r is lent,
But not convey'd to kingly government ;
That claims successive bear no binding force ;
'That coronation oaths are things of course ;

Maintains, the multitude can never err ;
 And sets the people in the papal chair.
 The reason's obvious ; *Int'rest never lies* ;
 The most have still their int'rest in their eyes ;
 The pow'r is always theirs, and pow'r is ever wise. }
 Almighty crowd ! thou storten'st all dispute ;
 Pow'r is thy essence, wit thy attribute :
 Nor faith nor reason make thee at a stay,
 Thou leap'st o'er all eternal truths, in thy Pindaric way.
 Athens, no doubt, did righteously decide,
 When Phocion and when Socrates were try'd :
 As righteously they did those dooms repent ;
 Still they were wise, whatever way they went.
 Crowds err not, though to both extremes they run ;
 To kill the father, and recal the son.
 Some think the fools were most, as times went then ;
 But now the world's o'erstock'd with prudent men.
 The common cry is e'en religion's test ;
 The Turk's is, at Constantinople, best ;
 Idols in India, popery at Rome ;
 And our own worship only true at home :
 And true, but for the time ; 'tis hard to know
 How long we please it shall continue so.
 This side, to-day, and that to-morrow burns ;
 So all are God-a'mighties in their turns.
 A tempting doctrine, plausible and new :
 What fools our fathers were, if this be true !
 Who, to destroy the seeds of civil war,
 Inherent right in monarchs did declare :
 And, that a lawful power might never cease,
 Secur'd succession, to secure our peace.

Thus property and sov'reign sway, at last,
In equal balances were justly cast.
But this new Jehu spurs the hot-mouth'd horse ;
Instructs the beast to know his native force ;
To take the bit between his teeth, and fly
To the next heedlong steep of anarchy.
O happy England, if our good we knew,
Would we possess the freedom we pursue !
'The lavish government can give no more :
Yet we repine ; and plenty makes us poor.
God tried us once ; our rebel-fathers fought ;
He glutted 'em with all the pow'r they fought ;
'Till, master'd by their own usurping brave,
The free-born subject sunk into a slave.
We lothe our manna, and we long for quails ;
Ah what is man when his own wish prevails !
How rash, how swift to plunge himself in ill !
Proud of his pow'r, and boundless in his will !
'That kings can do no wrong, we must believe :
None can they do, and must they all receive ?
Help heav'n ! or sadly we shall see an hour,
When neither wrong nor right are in their pow'r !
Already they have lost their best defence,
The benefit of laws, which they dispense ;
No justice to their righteous cause allow'd ;
But baffl'd by an arbitrary crowd ;
And medals grav'd, their conquest to record,
The stamp and coin of their adopted lord.

The man, who laugh'd but once, to see an ass
Mumbl'ing to make the cross-grain'd thistles pass,
Might laugh again, to see a jury chaw
The prickles of unpalatable law.

'The witnesses, that, leech-like, liv'd on blood,
 Sucking for them were med'cinally good :
 But when they fasten'd on their fester'd fore,
 Then justice and religion they forswore ;
 Their maiden oaths debauch'd into a whore. }
 Thus men are rais'd by factions, and decry'd ;
 And rogue and saint distinguish'd by their side.
 They rack e'en scripture to confess their cause ;
 And plead a call to preach, in spite of laws.
 But that's no news to the poor injur'd page ;
 It has been us'd as ill in every age ;
 And is constrain'd, with patience, all to take :
 For what defence can Greek and Hebrew make ?
 Happy, who can this talking trumpet seize ;
 They make it speak whatever sense they please.
 'Twas fram'd, at first, our oracle t'enquire ;
 But, since our sects in prophecy grew higher, [spire. }
 The text inspires not them ; but they the text in- }

London, thou great emporium of our isle,
 O thou too bounteous, thou too fruitful Nile,
 How shall I praise or curse to thy desert !
 Or separate thy sound from thy corrupted part !
 I call'd thee Nile ; the parallel will stand :
 Thy tides of wealth o'erflow the fatten'd land ;
 Yet monsters from thy large increase we find,
 Engender'd on the slime thou leav'st behind.
 Sedition has not wholly seiz'd on thee ;
 Thy nobler parts are from infection free.
 Of Israel's tribes thou hast a numerous band ;
 But still the Canaanite is in the land.
 Thy military chiefs are brave and true :
 Nor are thy disenchanted burghers few.

The head is loyal which thy heart commands ;
But what's a head with two such gouty hands ?
The wise and wealthy love the surest way,
And are content to thrive and to obey.
But wisdom is to sloth too great a slave ;
None are so busy as the fool and knave.
Those let me curse ; what vengeance will they urge,
Whose ordures neither plague nor fire can purge !
Nor sharp experience can to duty bring,
Nor angry heav'n, nor a forgiving king !
In gospel-phraze their chapmen they betray :
Their shops are dens, the buyer is their prey ;
The knack of trades is, living on the spoil ;
They boast, e'en when each other they beguile.
Customs to steal is such a trivial thing,
That 'tis their charter, to defraud their king.
All hands unite of every jarring sect ;
They cheat the country first, and then infect.
They, for God's cause, their monarchs dare dethrone ;
And they'll be sure to make his cause their own.
Whether the plotting Jesuit laid the plan
Of murd'ring kings, or the French Puritan,
Our sacrilegious sects their guides out-go,
And kings and kingly pow'r would murder too.

What means their trait'rous combination less,
Too plain t'evade, too shameful to confess ?
But treason is not own'd when 'tis descry'd ;
Successful crimes alone are justify'd.
The men who no conspiracy would find,
Who doubts but, had it taken, they had join'd ;
Join'd in a mutual cov'nant of defence,
At first, without, at last, against their prince.

If sov'reign right by sov'reign pow'r they scan,
 The same bold maxim holds in God and man :
 God were not safe, his thunder could they shun;
 He should be forc'd to crown another son.

Thus, when the heir was from the vineyard thrown,
 The rich possession was the murd'rer's own.

In vain to sophistry they have recourse;
 By proving theirs no plot, they prove 'tis worse;
 Unmask'd rebellion, and audacious force.

Which, though not actual, yet all eyes may see

'Tis working, in th' immediate pow'r to be;

For, from pretended grievances they rise,

First to dislike, and after to despise;

Then, Cyclop-like, in human flesh to deal;

Chop up a minister at every meal;

Perhaps not wholly to melt down the king;

But clip his regal rights within the ring.

From thence, t' assume the pow'r of peace and war;

And ease him by degrees of public care.

Yet, to consult his dignity and fame,

He should have leave to exercise the name;

And hold the cards, while commons play'd the game.

For what can pow'r give more than food and drink,

To live at ease, and not be bound think?

These are the cooler methods of their crime;

But their hot zealots think 'tis loss of time;

On utmost bounds of loyalty they stand,

And grin and whet like a Croatian band,

That waits impatient for the last command.

Thus outlaws open villany maintain;

They steal not, but in squadrons scowr the plain :

And, if their pow'r the passengers subdue,
The most have right, the wrong is in the few.
Such impious axioms foolishly they show ;
For, in some soils, republics will not grow ;
Our temp'rate isle will no extremes sustain,
Of pop'lar sway, or arbitrary reign ;
But slides between them both into the best ;
Secure in freedom, in a monarch blest.

And though the climate, vex'd with various winds,
Works, through our yielding bodies, on our minds,
The wholesome tempest purges what it breeds,
To recommend the calmness that succeeds.

But thou, the pandor of the people's hearts,
O crooked foul, and serpentine in arts!
Whose blandishments a loyal hand have whor'd,
And broke the bonds she plighted to her lord ;
What curses on thy blasted name will fall!
Which age to age their legacy shall call ;
For all must curse the woes that must descend on all. }
Religion thou hast none ; thy Mercury
Has past through ev'ry sect, or theirs through thee.
But what thou giv'st, that venom still remains ;
And the pox'd nation feels thee in their brains.
What else inspires the tongue, and swells the breasts
Of all thy bellowing renegado priests,
That preach up thee for God ; dispense thy laws,
And with thy stum ferment their fainting cause ;
Fresh fumes of madness raise ; and toil and sweat
To make the formidable cripple great ?
Yet, shou'd thy crimes succeed, shou'd lawless pow'r
Compass those ends thy greedy hopes devour,

Thy canting friends thy mortal foes wou'd be;
 Thy god and theirs will never long agree.
 For thine (if thou hast any) must be one
 That lets the world and human-kind alone;
 A jolly god, that passes hours too well
 To promise heav'n, or threaten us with hell:
 That unconcern'd can at rebellion sit,
 And wink at crimes he did himself commit.
 A tyrant theirs; the heav'n their priesthood paints
 A conventicle of gloomy fullen faints;
 A heav'n, like bedlam, slovenly and sad;
 Foredoom'd for souls, with false religion mad.

Without a vision poets can foreshow
 What all but fools, by common sense, may know:
 If true succession from our isle should fail,
 And crowds profane with impious arms prevail;
 Not thou, nor those thy factious arts engage,
 Shall reap that harvest of rebellious rage,
 With which thou flatter'st thy decrepit age.
 The swelling poison of the sev'ral sects,
 Which, wanting vent, the nation's health infects,
 Shall burst its bag; and, fighting out their way,
 The various venoms on each other prey.
 The Presbyter, puffed up with spiritual pride,
 Shall on the necks of the lewd nobles ride;
 His brethren damn, the civil pow'r defy;
 And parcel out republic prelacy.
 But short shall be his reign; his rigid yoke
 And tyrant pow'r will puny sects provoke;
 And frogs and toads, and all the tadpole train,
 Will croak to Heav'n for help, from this devouring
 crane.

The cut-throat sword and clamorous gown shall jar,
 In sharing their ill-gotten spoils of war:
 Chiefs shall be grudg'd the part which they pretend;
 Lords envy lords, and friends with every friend
 About their impious merit shall contend.

The surly commons shall respect deny,
 And juggle peerage out with property.

Their gen'ral either shall his trust betray,
 And force the crowd to arbitrary sway;
 Or they, suspecting his ambitious aim,
 In hate of kings, shall cast anew the frame;
 And thrust out Collatine that bore their name.

Thus inborn broils the factions would engage,
 Or wars of exil'd heirs, or foreign rage;
 'Till halting vengeance overtook our age.
 And our wild labours, wearied into rest,
 Reclin'd us on a rightful monarch's breast.

-----*Pudet haec opprobria vobis*

Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

RELIGIO LAICI:

OR, A

LAYMAN'S FAITH.

A

P O E M.

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P R E F A C E.

A Poem with so bold a title, and a name prefixed, from which the handling of so serious a subject would not be expected, may reasonably oblige the author to say somewhat, in defence both of himself, and of his undertaking. In the first place, if it be objected to me, that, being a *layman*, I ought not to have concerned myself with speculations which belong to the profession of *divinity*; I could answer, that, perhaps, laymen, with equal advantages of parts and knowledge, are not the most incompetent judges of sacred things. But, in the due sense of my own weakness and want of learning, I plead not this; I pretend not to make myself a judge of faith in others, but only to make a confession of my own. I lay no unhallowed hand upon the ark; but wait on it, with the reverence that becomes me, at a distance. In the next place, I will ingenuously confess, that the helps I have used in this small treatise were many of them taken from the works of our own reverend divines of the church of England: So that the weapons, with which I combat irreligion, are already consecrated; though, I suppose, they may be taken down as lawfully as the sword of Goliath was by David, when they are to be employed for the common cause, against the enemies of piety. I intend not by this to entitle them to any of my errors; which yet

I hope, are only those of charity to mankind ; and such as my *own* charity has caused me to commit, that of *others* may more easily excuse. Being naturally inclined to scepticism in philosophy, I have no reason to impose my opinions in a subject which is above it. But, whatever they are, I submit them with all reverence to my mother-church, accounting them no farther mine, than as they are authoris'd, or at least uncondemned by her. And, indeed, to secure myself on this side, I have used the necessary precaution, of shewing this paper, before it was published, to a judicious and learned friend, a man indefatigably zealous in the service of the church and state, and whose writings have highly deserved of both. He was pleased to approve the body of the discourse, and I hope he is more my friend, than to do it out of complaisance. 'Tis true, he had too good a taste to like it all ; and, amongst some other faults, recommended to my second view, what I have written, perhaps too boldly, on St Athanasius ; which he advis'd me wholly to omit. I am sensible enough, that I had done more *prudently* to have followed his opinion : But then I could not have satisfied myself, that I had done honestly, not to have written what was my own. It has always been my *thought*, that heathens, who never did, nor, without miracle, could hear of the name of Christ, were yet in a possibility of salvation. Neither will it enter easily into my belief, that, before the coming of our Saviour, the whole world, excepting only the Jewish nation, should lie under the inevitable necessity of everlasting punishment, for want of that revelation which was confined to so small a spot of ground as that of Palestine. Among

the sons of Noah, we read of one only who was accursed; and if a blessing in the ripeness of time was reserved for Japhet (of whose pregeny we are) it seems unaccountable to me, why so many generations of the same offspring, as preceeded our Saviour in the flesh, should be all involved to one common condemnation, and yet that their posterity should be intitled to the hopes of salvation: As if a bill of exclusion had passed only on the fathers, which debarred not the sons from their succession: Or that so many ages had been *delivered over* to hell, and so many *reserved* for heaven; and that the devil had the first choice, and God the next. Truly I am apt to think, that the revealed religion, which was taught by Noah to all his sons, might continue for some ages in the whole posterity. That afterwards it was included wholly in the family of Shem, is manifest: But when the progenies of Cham and Japhet swarmed into colonies, and those colonies were subdivided into many others; in process of time their descendents lost, by little and little, the primitive and purer rites of divine worship, retaining only the notion of one Deity; to which succeeding generations added others: For men took their degrees in those ages from conquerors to gods. Revelation being thus eclipsed to almost all mankind, the light of nature, as the next in dignity, was substituted; and that is it, which St Paul concludes to be the rule of the heathens; and by which they are hereafter to be judged. If my supposition be true, then the consequence, which I have assumed in my poem, may be also true; namely, that Deism, or the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of revealed

religion in the posterity of Noah ; and that our modern philosophers, nay, and some of our philosophising divines, have too much exalted the faculties of our souls, when they have maintained, that by their force mankind has been able to find out, that there is one supreme agent, or intellectual being, which we call God ; that praise and prayer are his due worship ; and the rest of those deducements, which I am confident are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our discourse, I mean as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination. So that we have not lifted up ourselves to God by the weak pinions of our reason ; but he has been pleased to descend to us : And what Socrates said of him, what Plato writ, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah. That there is something above us, some principle of *motion*, our reason can apprehend, though it cannot discover what it is, by its own virtue. And indeed 'tis very improbable that we, who by the strength of our faculties cannot enter into the knowledge of any *being*, not so much as our *own*, should be able to find out, by them, that Supreme Nature, which we cannot otherwise define than by saying it is infinite ; as if infinite were definable, or infinity a subject for our narrow understanding. They, who would prove religion by reason, do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support : 'Tis to take away the pillar from our faith, and to prop it only with a twig : 'Tis to design a tower like that of Babel, which, if it were possible (as it is not) to reach heaven, would come to nothing by the confusion of the

workmen. For every man is building a several way, impotently conceited of his own model, and his own materials: Reason is always striving, and always at a loss; and, of necessity, it must so come to pass, while 'tis exercised about that which is not its proper object. Let us be content at last, to know God by his own methods; at least so much of him as he is pleased to reveal to us in the sacred scriptures: To apprehend them to be the word of God is all our reason has to do; for all beyond it is the work of faith, which is the seal of Heaven impressed upon our human understanding.

And now, for what concerns the holy bishop Athanasius; the preface of whose creed seems inconsistent with my opinion, which is, that heathens may possibly be saved: In the first place, I desire it may be considered, that it is the preface only, not the creed itself, which ('till I am better informed) is of too hard a digestion for my charity. 'Tis not that I am ignorant how many several texts of scripture seemingly support that cause; but neither am I ignorant how all those texts may receive a kinder and more mollified interpretation. Every man, who is read in church-history, knows, *that* belief was drawn up after long contestation with Arius, concerning the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and his being one substance with the Father; and that, thus compiled, it was sent abroad among the Christian churches, as a kind of test, which whosoever took was looked on as an orthodox believer. 'Tis manifest from hence, that the heathen part of the empire was not concerned in it: For its business was not to distinguish betwixt Pagans and Christians, but betwixt heretics and true believers. This, well considered, takes

off the heavy weight of censure, which I would willingly avoid, from so venerable a man; for if this proposition, *Whosoever will be saved*, be restrained only to those to whom it was intended, and for whom it was composed, I mean the Christians; then the *anathema* reaches not the heathens, who had never heard of Christ, and were nothing interested in that dispute. After all, I am far from blaming even that prefatory addition to the creed, and as far from cavilling at the continuation of it in the liturgy of the church; where, on the days appointed, 'tis publicly read: For, I suppose, there is the same reason for it now, in opposition to the Socinians, as there was then against the Arians; the one being a heresy, which seems to have been refined out of the other; and with how much more plausibility of reason it combats our religion, with so much more caution to be avoided: And therefore the prudence of our church is to be commended, which has interposed her authority for the recommendation of this creed. Yet to such as are grounded in the true belief, those explanatory creeds, the Nicene, and this of Athanasius, might perhaps be spared: For what is supernatural will always be a mystery in spite of exposition: And for my own part the plain *apostles creed* is most suitable to my weak understanding; as the simplest diet is the most easy of digestion.

I have dwelt longer on this subject than I intended; and longer than, perhaps, I ought; for having laid down, as my foundation, that the Scripture is a rule; that, in all things needful to salvation, it is clear, sufficient, and ordained by God Almighty for that purpose; I have left myself no right to interpret obscure

places, such as concern the possibility of eternal happiness to heathens : Because whatsoever is obscure is concluded not necessary to be known.

But, by asserting the Scripture to be the canon of our faith, I have unavoidably created to myself two sorts of enemies : The Papists, indeed, more directly, because they have kept the Scripture from us, what they could, and have reserved to themselves a right of interpreting what they have delivered, under the pretence of infallibility : And the fanatics more collaterally, because they have assumed to what amounts to an infallibility, in the private spirit ; and have detorted those texts of Scripture, which are not necessary to salvation, to the damnable uses of sedition, disturbance, and destruction of the civil government. To begin with the Papists, and, to speak freely, I think them the less dangerous (at least in appearance) to our present state ; for not only the penal laws are in force against them, and their number is contemptible ; but also their peerage and commons are excluded from parliaments, and consequently those laws in no probability of being repealed. A general and uninterrupted plot of their clergy, ever since the reformation, I suppose all Protestants believe. For 'tis not reasonable to think but that so many of their orders, as were outed from their fat possessions, would endeavour a re-entrance against those whom they account heretics. As for the late design, Mr Coleman's letters, for aught I know, are the best evidence ; and what they discover, without wire-drawing their sense, or malicious glosses, all men of reason conclude credible. If there be any thing more than is required of me, I

must believe it as well as I am able, in spite of the witnesses, and out of a decent conformity to the votes of parliament: For I suppose the fanatics will not allow the private spirit in this case. Here the infallibility is at least in one part of the government; and our understandings as well as our wills are represented. But to return to the Roman Catholics, how can we be secure from the practice of Jesuited Papists in that religion? For not two or three of that order, as some of them would impose upon us, but almost the whole body of them, are of opinion, that their infallible master has a right over kings, not only in spirituals, but temporals. Not to name Mariano, Bellarmine, Emanuel Sa, Molina, Santaret, Simanca, and at least twenty others of foreign countries; we can produce of own nation, Campian, and Doleman, or Parsons, besides many are named whom I have not read, who all of them attest this doctrine, that the Pope can depose and give away the right of any sovereign prince, *si vel paulum deflexerit*, if he shall never so little warp: But, if he once comes to be excommunicated, then the bond of obedience is taken off from subjects; and they may and ought to drive him, like another Nebuchadnezzar, *ex hominum Christianorum dominatu*, from exercising dominion over Christians: And to this they are bound by virtue of divine precept, and by all the ties of conscience, under no less penalty than damnation. If they answer me (as a learned priest has lately written) that this doctrine of the Jesuits is not *de fide*, and that consequently they are not obliged by it, they must pardon me, if I think they have said nothing to the purpose; for 'tis a maxim in their

church, where points of faith are not decided, and that doctors are of contrary opinions, they may follow which part they please; but more safely the most received and most authorized. And their champion Bellarmine has told the world, in his apology, that the king of England is a vassal to the pope, *ratione directi dominii*, and that he holds in villanage of his Roman landlord; which is no new claim put in for England. Our chronicles are his authentic witnesses, that King John was deposed by the same plea, and Philip Augustus admitted tenant. And (which makes the more for Bellarmine) the French king was again ejected, when our king submitted to the church, and the crown received under the fordid condition of vassalage.

'Tis not sufficient for the more moderate and well-meaning papists (of which I doubt not there are many) to produce the evidences of their loyalty to the late king, and to declare their innocence in this plot. I will grant their behaviour, in the first, to have been as loyal and as brave as they desire; and will be willing to hold them excused as to the second; I mean, when it comes to my turn, and after my betters; for 'tis a madness to be sober alone, while the nation continues drunk. But that saying of their father Cref. is still running in my head, that they may be dispensed with in their obedience to an heretic prince, while the necessity of the times will oblige them to it; for that (as another of them tells us) is only the effect of Christian prudence: But when once they shall get power to shake him off, an heretic is no lawful king; and, consequently, to rise against him is no rebellion. I should be glad, therefore, that they would follow the advice, which

was charitably given them by a reverend prelate of our church, namely, that they would join in a public act of disowning and detesting those Jesuitic principles; and subscribe to all doctrines which deny the pope's authority of deposing kings, and releasing subjects from their oath of allegiance; to which I should think they might easily be induced, if it be true that this present pope has condemned the doctrine of king-killing (a thesis of the Jesuits) amongst others, *ex cathedra*, (as they call it) or in open consistory.

Leaving them, therefore, in so fair a way (if they please themselves) of satisfying all reasonable men of their sincerity and good meaning to the government, I shall make bold to consider that other extreme of our religion, I mean the fanatics, or schismatics of the English church. Since the bible has been translated into our tongue, they have us'd it so, as if their business was not to be sav'd, but to be damn'd, by its contents. If we consider only them, better had it been for the English nation, that it had still remained in the original Greek and Hebrew, or at least in the honest Latin of St Jerome, than that several texts in it should have been prevaricated to the destruction of that government, which put it into so ungrateful hands.

How many heresies the first translation of Tyndal produced in few years, let my Lord Herbert's History of Henry the Eighth inform you; insomuch that for the gross errors in it, and the great mischiefs it occasioned, a sentence passed, on the first edition of the Bible, too shameful almost to be repeated. After the short reign of Edward the Sixth (who had continued

to carry on the reformation on other principles than it was begun) every one knows, that not only the chief promoters of that work, but many others, whose consciences would not dispense with popery, were forced, for fear of persecution, to change climates; from whence returning at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, many of them, who had been in France, and at Geneva, brought back the rigid opinions and imperious discipline of Calvin, to graft upon our reformation: Which though they cunningly concealed at first, as well knowing how nauseously that drug would go down in a lawful monarchy, which was prescribed for a rebellious commonwealth, yet they always kept it in reserve; and were never wanting to themselves either in court or parliament, when either they had any prospect of a numerous party of fanatic members in the one, or the encouragement of any favourite in the other, whose covetousness was gaping at the patrimony of the church. They who will consult the works of our venerable Hooker, or the account of his life, or more particularly the letter written to him on this subject by George Cranmer, may see by what gradations they proceeded. From the dislike of cap and surplice, the very next step was admonitions to the parliament against the whole government ecclesiastical: Then came out volumes in English and Latin in defence of their tenets; and immediately practices were set on foot to erect their discipline without authority. Those not succeeding, satire and railing was the next; and *Martin Mar-Pre-late* (the *Marvel* of those times) was the first presbyterian scribbler who sanctified libels and scurrility to

the use of the good old cause. Which was done (says my author) upon this account: that (their serious treatises having been fully answered and refuted) they might compass by railing what they had lost by reasoning; and when their cause was sunk in court and parliament, they might at least hedge in a stake amongst the rabble; for to their ignorance all things are wit which are abusive; but if church and state were made the theme, then the doctoral degree of wit was to be taken at Billingsgate. Even the most saint-like of the party, though they durst not excuse this contempt and vilifying of the government, yet were pleas'd, and grinn'd at it with a pious smile; and call'd it a judgment of God against the hierarchy. Thus sectaries, we may see, were born with teeth, foul-mouth'd and scurrilous from their infancy; and if spiritual pride, venom, violence, contempt of superiors, and slander, had been the marks of orthodox belief, the Presbytery and the rest of our schismatics, which are their spawn, were always the most visible church in the Christian world.

'Tis true, the government was too strong at that time for a rebellion; but, to shew what proficiency they had made in Calvin's school, even *then* their mouths water'd at it; for two of their gifted brotherhood (Hacket and Coppinger) as their story tells us, got up into a pease-cart, and harangued the people, to dispose them to an insurrection, and to establish their discipline by force: So that, however it comes about, that now they celebrate Queen Elizabeth's birth-night, as that of their saint and patroness; yet then they were for doing the work of the Lord by arms against

her; and, in all probability, they wanted but a fanatic lord mayor and two sheriffs of their party, to have compassed it.

Our venerable Hooker, after many admonitions, which he had given them towards the end of his preface, breaks out into this prophetic speech : “ There
“ is in every one of these considerations most just cause
“ to fear, lest our hastiness to embrace a thing of so
“ perilous consequence,” (meaning the Presbyterian discipline) “ should cause posterity to feel those evils,
“ which as yet are more easy for us to prevent, than
“ they would be for them to remedy.”

How fatally this Cassandra has foretold, we know too well by sad experience. The seeds were sown in the time of Queen Elizabeth; the bloody harvest ripened in the reign of King Charles the Martyr; and, because all the sheaves could not be carried off without shedding some of the loose grains, another crop is too like to follow; nay, I fear, 'tis unavoidable, if the conventiclers be permitted still to scatter.

A man may be suffered to quote an adversary to our religion, when he speaks truth : And 'tis the observation of Maimbourgh, in his History of Calvinism, that, wherever that discipline was planted and embraced, rebellion, civil war, and misery attended it. And how, indeed, should it happen otherwise? Reformation of church and state has always been the ground of our divisions in England. While we were Papists, our holy father rid us, by pretending authority out of the Scriptures to depose princes. When we shook off his authority, the sectaries furnished themselves with the same weapons, and out of the same magazine, the

Bible. So that the Scriptures, which are in themselves the greatest security of governors, as commanding express obedience to them, are now turned to their destruction; and never, since the reformation, has there wanted a text of their interpreting to authorize a rebel. And 'tis to be noted by the way, that the doctrines of king-killing and deposing, which have been taken up only by the worst party of the Papists, the most frontless flatterers of the Pope's authority, have been espoused, defended, and are still maintained by the whole body of nonconformists and republicans. 'Tis but dubbing themselves the people of God, which 'tis the interest of their preachers to tell them they are, and their own interest to believe; and, after that, they cannot dip into the Bible, but one text or another will turn up for their purpose. If they are under persecution, as they call it, then that is a mark of their election; if they flourish, then God works miracles for their deliverance, and the saints are to possess the earth.

They may think themselves to be too roughly handled in this paper; but I, who know best how far I could have gone on this subject, must be bold to tell them they are spared; though, at the same time, I am not ignorant, that they interpret the mildness of a writer to them, as they do the mercy of the government: In the one they think it fear, and conclude it weakness in the other. The best way for them to confute me, is, as I before advised the Papists, to disclaim their principles, and renounce their practices. We shall all be glad to think them true Englishmen,

when they obey the king; and true Protestants, when they conform to the church-discipline.

It remains that I acquaint the reader, that the verses were written for an ingenious young gentleman, my friend, upon his translation of *The Critical History of the Old Testament*, composed by the learned Father Simon: The verses therefore are addressed to the translator of that work, and the style of them is, what it ought to be, epistolary.

If any one be so lamentable a critic, as to require the smoothness, the numbers, and the turn of heroic poetry, in this poem; I must tell him, that, if he has not read Horace, I have studied him, and hope the style of his epistles is not ill imitated here. The expressions of a poem, designed purely for instruction, ought to be plain and natural, and yet majestic; for here the poet is presumed to be a kind of lawgiver, and those three qualities, which I have named, are proper to the legislative style. The florid, elevated, and figurative way is for the passions; for love and hatred, fear and anger, are begotten in the soul by shewing their objects out of their true proportion; either greater than the life, or less: But instruction is to be given by shewing them what they naturally are. A man is to be cheated into passion, but to be reasoned into truth.

RELIGIO LAICI.

D I M, as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars
To *lonely, weary, wand'ring* travellers,
Is *reason* to the *soul*: and as on high,
Those rowling fires *discover* but the sky,
Not light us *here*; so *reason's* glimmering ray
Was lent, not to *assure* our *doubtful* way,
But *guide* us upward to a *better* day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear,
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;
So pale grows *reason* at *religion's* sight;
So *dies*, and so *dissolves* in *supernatural* light.
Some few, whose lamp shone brighter, have been led,
From cause to cause, to *nature's* secret head;
And found that *one first principle* must be:
But *what*, or *who*, that *UNIVERSAL HE*;
Whether some *soul* incompassing this ball,
Unmade, unmov'd; yet *making, moving* all;
Or various *atoms* interfering dance
Leapt into *form*, the noble work of *chance*;
Or this great *all* was from *eternity*;
Not e'en the *Stagirite* himself could see;
And *Epicurus* guess'd as well as he.
As *blindly* grop'd they for a *future* state:
As *Rashly* judg'd of *Providence* and *Fate*:
But least of all could their endeavours find
What most concern'd the good of human kind;
For *happiness* was never to be found;
But vanish'd from 'em like enchanted ground.

* One thought *content* the good to be enjoy'd;
 This every little *accident* destroy'd:
 The *wiser madmen* did for *virtue* toil;
 A thorny, or at best a barren soil:
 In *pleasure* some their glutton souls would steep;
 But found their line too short, the well too deep;
 And leaky vessels which no *bliss* could keep.
 Thus *anxious thoughts* in *endless circles* rowl,
 Without a *centre* where to fix the *soul*:
 In this wild maze their vain endeavours end.
 How can the *less* the *greater* comprehend?
 Or *finite reason* reach *infinity*?
 For what could *fathom GOD* were *more* than *He*.

† The *Diest* thinks he stands on firmer ground;
 Cries, *εὐεγκα*; the mighty secret's found;
God is that *spring of good*; *supreme*, and *best*;
We, made to serve, and in that service *blest*.
 If so, some *rules* of worship must be given,
 Distributed alike to all by Heaven;
 Else *God* were *partial*, and to *some* deny'd
 The means his justice shou'd for all provide.
 This *general worship* is to PRAISE and PRAY;
 One part to *borrow* blessings, one to *pay*:
 And when frail nature slides into *offence*,
 The *sacrifice* for crimes is *penitence*.
 Yet, since th' effects of Providence, we find,
 Are variously dispens'd to human kind:

* Opinions of the several sects of philosophers concerning the *Summum Bonum*.

† System of Deism.

That *vice triumphs*, and *virtue suffers* here,
 (A brand that sovereign justice cannot bear)
 Our reason prompts us to a *future state*;
 The *last appeal* from *fortune*, and from *fate*:
 Where God's all-righteous ways will be declar'd;
 The *bad* meet *punishment*; the *good*, *reward*. [soar;

* Thus man, by his own strength, to heaven wou'd
 And wou'd not be oblig'd to God for more.
 Vain, wretched creature, how art thou misled
 To think thy wit these god-like notions bred!
 'These truths are not the product of thy mind,
 But dropt from heav'n, and of a nobler kind.
Reveal'd religion first inform'd thy sight,
 And *reason* saw not, 'till *faith* sprung the light.
 Hence all thy *natural worship* takes the source:
 'Tis *revelation* what thou think'st *discourse*.
 Else, how cam'st thou to see these truths so clear,
 Which so obscure to *Heathens* did appear?
 Not *Plato* these, nor *Aristotle* found:
 Nor † he whose wisdom *oracles* renown'd.
 Hast thou a wit so deep, or so sublime,
 Or canst thou lower dive, or higher climb?
 Canst thou, by *reason*, more of *Godhead* know,
 Than *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, or *Cicero*?
 Those giant wits, in happier ages born,
 When *arms* and *arts* did *Greece* and *Rome* adorn,
 Knew no such *system*; no such piles could raise
 Of *natural worship*, built on *pray'r* and *praise*,
 To one sole *God*:
 Nor did remorse, to expiate sin, prescribe;
 But slew their fellow-creatures for a bribe:

* Of reveal'd religion.

† Socrates.

The guiltless *victim* groan'd for their offence,
 And *cruelty* and *blood* was *penitence*.
 If *sheep* and *oxen* could atone for men,
 Ah! at how cheap a rate the *rich* might sin!
 And great oppressors might heaven's wreath beguile,
 By offering his own creatures for a spoil!

Dar'st thou, poor worm, offend *Infinity*?
 And must the terms of peace be given by *thee*?
 Then *thou* art *justice* in the *last appeal*;
 Thy *easy God* instructs thee to *rebel*:
 And, like a king remote, and weak, must take
 What satisfaction *thou* art pleas'd to make.

But if there be a *pow'r* too *just*, and strong,
 To wink at *crimes*, and bear unpunish'd *wrong*;
 Look humbly upward, see his will disclose
 The *forfeit* first, and then the *fine* impose:
 A *mult* thy poverty could never pay,
 Had not *Eternal Wisdom* found the way;
 And with celestial wealth supply'd thy store;
 His *justice* makes the *fine*, his *mercy* quits the *score*.
 See GOD descending in thy human frame;
 Th' *offended* suff'ring in the *offender's* name:
 All thy misdeeds to him imputed see,
 And all his righteousness devolv'd on thee.

For granting we have sinn'd, and that th' offence
 Of *man* is made against *Omnipotence*;
 Some price, that bears *proportion*, must be paid,
 And *infinite* with *infinite* be weigh'd.
 See then the *Deist* lost: *Remorse* for *vice*
 Not paid, or, paid, *inadequate* in price:
 What farther means can *reason* now direct?
 Or what relief from *human wit* expect?

That shews us sick ; and sadly are we sure
Still to be sick, 'till Heaven reveal the cure :
If then Heaven's will must needs be understood,
(Which must, if we want cure, and Heaven be good)
Let all records of will reveal'd be shown ;
With Scripture all in equal balance thrown,
And our one sacred book will be that one.

Proof needs not here ; for whether we compare
That impious, idle, superstitious ware
Of rites, lustrations, offerings, which before,
In various ages, various countries bore,
With Christian faith and virtues, we shall find
None answering the great ends of human kind,
But this one rule of life : That shews us best
How God may be appeas'd, and mortals blest.
Whether from length of time its worth we draw,
The world is scarce more ancient than the law :
Heaven's early care prescrib'd for ev'ry age ;
First, in the soul, and, after, in the page.
Or, whether more abstractedly we look,
Or on the writers, or the written book,
Whence, but from Heav'n, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths ? or how, or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie ?
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.

If on the book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent Heathens prove the story true :
The doctrine, miracles ; which must convince :
For Heav'n in them appeals to human sense :

And though they *prove* not, they *confirm* the cause,
When what is *taught* agrees with *nature's laws*.

Then for the *stile* ; *majestic* and *divine*,
It speaks no less than God in every line :
Commanding words ; whose *force* is still the same
As the first *fiat* that produc'd our frame.
All faiths *beside*, or did by *arms* ascend,
Or *sense* indulg'd has made *mankind* their friend :
This *only* doctrine does our *lusts oppose* ;
Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows ;
Cross to our *interests*, curbing *sense*, and *sin* ;
Oppress'd without, and undermin'd within,
It thrives through pain ; its own tormentors tires ;
And with a stubborn patience still aspires.
To what can *reason* such effects assign
Transcending *nature*, but to *laws divine* ?
Which in that sacred volume are contain'd ;
Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordain'd.

But stay ; the * *Deist* here will urge anew,
No *supernatural worship* can be *true* :
Because a *general law* is that alone,
Which must to *all*, and *every where* be known :
A *stile* so large as not *this book* can claim,
Nor aught that bears *reveal'd religion's name* :
'Tis said, the sound of a *Messiah's birth*
Is gone through all the habitable earth ;
But still that text must be confin'd alone
To what was *then* inhabited, and known :
And what provision could from *thence* accrue
To *Indian souls*, and worlds discover'd *new* ?

* Objection of the Deist.

In other parts it helps, that ages past,
 'The scriptures there were *known*, and were *embrac'd* :
 'Till sin spread once again the shades of night :
 What's that to these who never *saw* the light ?

† Of all objections this indeed is chief,
 To startle reason, stagger frail belief :
 We grant, 'tis true, that Heaven from human sense
 Has hid the secret paths of *Providence* :
 But *boundless wisdom*, *boundless mercy*, may
 Find, e'en for those *bewilder'd* souls, a *way* :
 If from his *nature* foes may pity claim,
 Much more may *strangers* who ne'er heard his *name*.
 And though *no name* be for *salvation* known,
 But that of his *eternal Son* alone ;
 Who knows how far transcending goodness can
 Extend the *merits* of *that Son* to *man* ?
 Who knows what *reasons* may his *mercy* lead ;
 Or *ignorance invincible* may plead ?
 Not only *charity* bids hope the *best*,
 But *more* the great *Apostle* has exprest ;
 That, if the *Gentiles* (whom no law inspir'd)
 By *nature* did what was by law requir'd ;
 They, who the *written rule* had never known,
 Were to themselves both *rule* and *law* alone :
 To *nature's* plain indictment they shall plead,
 And, by their *conscience*, be condemn'd or freed.
 Most righteous doom ! because a *rule* reveal'd
 Is *none* to those from whom it was conceal'd.
 Then those, who follow'd *reason's* dictates right,
 Liv'd up, and lifted high their *natural light* ;

† The objection answered.

With *Socrates* may see their Maker's face,
While thousand *rubric martyrs* want a place.

Nor doth it balk my *charity*, to find
'Th' *Egyptian* Bishop of another mind :
For, though his *creed eternal truth* contains,
'Tis hard for *man* to doom to *endless pains*
All who believ'd not all his zeal requir'd ;
Unless he first could prove he was inspir'd.
Then let us either think he meant to say,
This faith, where *publish'd*, was the only way ;
Or else conclude that, *Arius* to confute,
The good old man, too eager in dispute,
Flew high, and, as his *Christian* fury rose,
Damn'd all for *heretics* who durst oppose.

* Thus far my charity this path hath try'd ;
(A much unskilful, but well-meaning-guide)
Yet what they are, e'en these crude thoughts were bred
By reading that, which better thou hast read,
Thy matchless author's work : Which thou, my friend,
By well translating better dost commend :
Those youthful hours which, of thy equals most
In *toys* have *squander'd*, or in *vice* have *lost*,
Those hours hast thou to nobler use employ'd ;
And the severe delights of truth enjoy'd.
Witness this weighty book, in which appears
The crabbed toil of many thoughtful years,
Spent by thy author, in the sifting care
Of *Rabbins* old sophisticated ware
From gold divine ; which he who well can sort,
May afterwards make *Algebra* a sport.

* Digression to the Translator of Father Simon's
Critical History of the Old Testament.

A treasure, which if *country curates* buy,
 They *Junius* and *Tremellius* may defy;
 Save pains in various readings, and translations;
 And without *Hebrew* make most learn'd quotations.
 A work so full with various learning fraught,
 So nicely ponder'd, yet so strongly wrought,
 As nature's height and art's last hand requir'd;
 As much as man could compass, uninspir'd:
 Where we may see what *errors* have been made
 Both in the *copiers* and *translators* trade:
 How *Jewish*, *Popish*, interests have prevail'd,
 And where *infallibility* has fail'd.

For some, who have his secret meaning guess'd,
 Have found our author not *too much a priest*:
 For *fashion-sake* he seems to have recourse
 To *pope*, and *councils*, and *tradition's* force:
 But he that *old* traditions could subdue,
 Could not but find the weakness of the *new*.
 If *Scripture*, though deriv'd from *heav'nly* birth,
 Has been but carelessly preserv'd on *earth*;
 If *God's own people*, who of *God* before
 Knew what we know, and had been promis'd more,
 In fuller terms, of *Heav'n's* assisting care,
 And who did neither *time*, nor *study* spare
 To keep this book *untainted*, *unperplexed*,
 Let in gross *errors* to corrupt the *text*;
 Omitted *paragraphs*, embroil'd the *sense*;
 With vain *traditions* stopt the gaping fence,
 Which every common hand pull'd up with ease:
 What safety from such *brush-wood* helps as these?
 If *written words* from time are not secur'd,
 How can we think have *oral sounds* endur'd?

Which *thus* transmitted, if *one* mouth has fail'd,
Immortal lyes on *ages* are intail'd :
 And that some such have been, is prov'd too plain ;
 If we consider *interest*, *church*, and *gain*.

* Oh, but says one, *tradition* set aside,
 Where can we hope for an *unerring* guide ?
 For since th' *original* Scripture has been lost,
All copies *disagreeing*, *maim'd*, the *most*,
 Or *Christian* faith can have no *certain* ground,
 Or *truth* in *church-tradition* must be found.

Such an *omniscient* church we wish indeed ;
 'Twere worth *both* Testaments, and cast in the *creed* :
 But if *this* mother be a guide so sure,
 As can all *doubts* resolve, all *truths* secure,
 Then her *infallibility* as well,
 Where copies are *corrupt*, or *lame*, can tell ;
 Restore *lost* canon with as little pains,
 As truly *explicate* what still remains :
 Which yet no *council* dare pretend to do ;
 Unless, like *Esdras*, they could write it new :
 Strange confidence, still to interpret true,
 Yet not be sure that all they have explain'd !
 Is in the blest *original* contain'd !
 More safe, and much more modest 'tis to say,
 God would not leave mankind without a way ;
 And that the *Scriptures*, though not every where
 Free from corruption, or entire, or clear,

* Of the infallibility of tradition in general.

Are uncorrupt, sufficient, clear, entire,
 In *all* things which our needful *faith* require.
 If *others* in the *same glass* better see,
 'Tis for *themselves* they look, but not for *me* :
 For *MY* salvation must its doom receive
 Not from what *OTHERS*, but what I believe.

* Must *all tradition* then be set aside?
 This to affirm were ignorance, or pride.
 Are there not many points, some needful, sure,
 To saving faith, that Scripture leaves obscure?
 Which every sect will wrest a several way;
 For what *one* sect interprets, all sects *may* :
 We hold, and say we prove from Scripture plain,
 That *Christ is GOD*; the bold *Socinian*
 From the *same* Scripture urges he's but *MAN*.
 Now what appeal can end th'important suit?
Both parts talk loudly, but the *rule* is mute.

Shall I speak plain, and, in a nation free,
 Assume an honest *layman's liberty*?
 I think, (according to my little skill)
 To my own mother-church submitting still,
 That many have been fav'd, and many may,
 Who never heard this question brought in play.
 Th' *unletter'd* Christian, who believes in *gross*,
 Plods on to *heaven*, and ne'er is at a loss :
 For the *strait-gate* would be made *straiter* yet,
 Were *none* admitted there but men of *wit*.
 The few, by nature form'd, with learning fraught,
 Born to instruct, as others to be taught,

* Objection in behalf of tradition, urged by Father Simon.

Must study well the sacred page, and see
 Which doctrine, this, or that does best agree
 With the whole tenor of the work divine,
 And plainliest points to heav'n's reveal'd design:
Which exposition flows from genuine sense,
And which is forc'd by wit and eloquence.
 Not that tradition's parts are useless here,
 When general, old, disinterests'd and clear :
 That ancient fathers thus expound the page,
 Gives *truth* the reverend majesty of age ;
Confirms its force, by bidding every test ;
For best authorities next rules are best :
 And still the nearer to the spring we go,
 More limpid, more unsoil'd the waters flow.
 Thus *first traditions* were a proof alone ;
 Could we be *certain* such they *were*, so known ;
 But since some flaws in long descent may be,
 They make not *truth*, but *probability*.
 E'en *Arius* and *Pelagius* durst provoke
 To what the *centuries* preceeding spoke :
 Such difference is there in an oft-told tale ;
 But truth by its own sinews will prevail.
Tradition written therefore more commends
Authority, than what from *voice* descends :
 And this, as perfect as its kind can be,
 Rows down to us the sacred history ;
 Which, from the *universal church* receiv'd,
 Is try'd, and, *after*, for its *self* believ'd.

† The partial *Papists* would infer from hence,
 Their church, in last resort, should judge the *sense*.

† The second objection.

But first they would assume, with wond'rous art,
Themselves to be the *whole*, who are but *part*
 Of that vast frame, the church : * Yet grant they were
 The handers down, can they from thence infer
 A right t' interpret ? Or would they alone,
 Who brought the present, claim it for their own ?
 The *book's* a *common largess* to mankind ;
 Not more for *them*, than *every* man design'd :
 The *welcome news* is in the *letter* found ;
 The *carrier's* not commission'd to *expound*.
 It speaks it *self*, and what it does contain,
 In all things *needful* to be *known*, is *plain*.

In times o'ergrown with rust and ignorance,
 A gainful trade their clergy did advance ;
 When want of learning kept the *layman* low,
 And none but *priests* were *authoris'd* to *know* :
 When what small knowledge was, in them did dwell ;
 And he a *god*, who could but *read* or *spell* :
 Then *mother church* did *mightily* prevail ;
 She parcell'd out the Bible by *retail* :
 But still *expounded* what she *sold* or *gave* ;
 To keep it in her *pow'r* to *damn* and *save* :
Scripture was *scarce*, and, as the market went,
 Poor *laymen* took *salvation* on *content* ;
 As needy men take money, good or bad :
God's word they had not, but the *priest's* they had.
 Yet, whate'er *false conveyances* they made,
 The *lawyer* still was *certain* to be paid.
 In those dark times they learn'd their knack so well,
 That by long use they grew *infallible*.

* Answer to the objection.

At last, a knowing age began t' inquire
 If *they* the book, or *that* did *them* inspire;
 And, making narrower search, they found, tho' late,
 That what they thought the *priest's* was *their* estate:
 Taught by the *will produc'd* (the written word)
 How long they had been *cheated* on record.
 Then every man, who saw the title fair,
 Claim'd a child's part, and put in for a share:
 Consulted soberly his private good,
 And sav'd himself as cheap as e'er he cou'd.

'Tis true, my friend (and far be flattery hence)
 This good had full as bad a consequence:
 The book thus put in every vulgar hand,
 Which each presum'd he best could understand,
 The *common rule* was made the *common prey*;
 And at the mercy of the *rabble* lay.
 The tender page with horny fists was gaul'd;
 And he was gifted most that loudest baul'd:
 The *Spirit* gave the *doctoral degree*;
 And every member of a *company*
 Was of *his trade*, and of the *Bible*, free. }
 Plain *truths* enough for needful *use* they found;
 But men would still be itching to *expound*:
 Each was ambitious of th' obscurest place,
 No measure ta'en from *knowledge*, all from *GRACE*.
 Study and *pains* were now no more their care;
Texts were explain'd by *fasting*, and by *pray'r*:
 This was the fruit the *private spirit* brought;
 Occasion'd by *great zeal*, and *little thought*.
 While crowds unlearn'd, with rude devotion warm,
 About the sacred viands buz and swarm,

The *fly-blown text* creates a *crawling brood*;
And turns to *maggots* what was meant for *food*.

A thousand daily sects rise up, and die;

A thousand more the perish'd race supply;

So all we make of heav'n's discover'd will

Is, not to have it, or to use it ill.

The danger's much the same, on several shelves

If *others wreck us*, or *we wreck our selves*.

What then remains, but, waving each extreme,

The tides of ignorance, and pride to stem?

Neither so rich a treasure to forego,

Nor proudly seek beyond our pow'r to know;

Faith is not built on disquisitions vain;

The things we *must* believe, are *few* and *plain*;

But since men *will* believe more than they *need*,

And every man will make *himself* a creed;

In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way

To learn what unsuspected ancients say;

For 'tis not likely *we* should higher soar

In search of heav'n, than *all the church before*;

Nor can we be deceiv'd, unless we see

The *Scripture* and the *fathers disagree*.

If, after all, they stand suspected still,

(For no man's faith depends upon his will)

'Tis some relief, that points, not clearly known,

Without much hazard may be let alone:

And, after hearing what our church can say,

If still our reason runs another way,

That private reason 'tis more just to curb,

Than by disputes the public peace disturb.

For points obscure are of small use to learn:

But *common quiet* is *mankind's concern*.

Thus I have made my own opinions clear;
Yet neither praise expect, nor censure fear;
And this unpolish'd, rugged verse I chose,
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose:
For, while from sacred truth I do not swerve,
Tom Sternhold's or Tom Shadwell's rhimes will serve.

The END *of the* FIRST VOLUME.





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